



KENNEDY'S SECRET
The President and the pregnant mistress
PAGE 10



INTERFACE GIFT GUIDE
The best gizmos that money can buy



KAMA SUTRA: THE FILM
Sex on the screen shocks India's critics
PAGE 13



Ministers 'were misled on pesticides'

Civil servants accused over Gulf illness

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Government announced last night a wide-ranging £1.3 million inquiry into Gulf War syndrome after ministers said that the Commons had been misled over the use of chemicals on troops during the conflict.

Civil servants at the Ministry of Defence who gave false information to ministers about the use of potentially dangerous pesticides during the Gulf War could face dismissal. As the research study into the syndrome was announced, Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister, said that a separate investigation had begun into the action of civil servants who had caused ministers to mislead the Commons, for more than two years.

The health implications arising from widespread use of organophosphate pesticides against disease-carrying insects in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait will be considered in the new study by the Medical Research Council into the Gulf War illnesses that have affected more than 4,000 British servicemen and women.

Mr Soames, backed by Admiral Anthony Reynolds, the Surgeon-General, and Professor Alan McGregor, chairman of the Medical Research Council's advisory committee on Gulf War illness, continued to insist yesterday that there was no common denominator linking the various illnesses to justify calling them a syndrome. However, the two years it took for ministers to be told the truth about the scale of the pesticide spraying has given



"I'd believe in Gulf War syndrome if there was more proof that it existed"

mentary questions in the Commons and in the House of Lords until September 25 this year when ministers were given the true picture.

David Clark, Labour defence spokesman, said: "The way in which Parliament was misled demonstrates the ministry's lack of commitment to getting to the bottom of the problem."

In the Lords, Earl Howe, a junior Defence Minister who has admitted inadvertently misleading Parliament on the use of organophosphate pesticides in the Gulf, denied any negligence.

A Defence Ministry team set up in October to investigate the use of pesticides discovered that huge stocks were bought in the Gulf, usually with Arabic instructions and no information in English on the ingredients.

The new epidemiological research, which will take three years, will involve two studies, each comparing the health records of 3,000 service people who went to the Gulf with those of 3,000 who did not. Professor Nicola Cherry, of the School of Epidemiology and Health Sciences at Manchester University, will try to determine whether there was an excess of ill health among service people who served in the Gulf.

Dr Patricia Doyle, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, will study the reproductive health of Gulf War ex-servicemen and their children.

Pesticide study, page 2



A member of B Company, The Royal Scots, based near the Gulf War front line, receives an injection in Saudi Arabia against chemical attack

Six Army officers are charged with rape

BY ADRIAN LEE AND MICHAEL EVANS

SIX young Army officers have been charged with raping a civilian student at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham in Wiltshire. The six officers, two of whom are captains, have been charged over an alleged incident on May 27.

An investigation by Ministry of Defence police into the allegations only began this month because the woman involved did not come forward until recently.

Five of the officers, all

arrested on December 3 at locations in the Home Counties, including an officers' mess, appeared at Wantage Magistrates' Court in Oxfordshire on December 4 and were remanded in custody until today.

A sixth officer was arrested on December 3 in North Yorkshire and was taken to Northallerton police station where he was released on conditional bail. He did not appear at Wantage and will be making his first appearance with the others there today.

The court lists those charged as: Captain Philip

James Bates, 25, of Bordon, Hampshire; officer cadet Darren Bartlett, 23, of Arborfield, Reading; officer cadet Andrew John Stout, 20, of Lindale Avenue, Wickham, Newmarket; officer cadet Nicholas Oettinger, 20, of Preston, Lancashire; and Captain Matthew James Tupling, 23, of Bordon, Hampshire. The officer arrested in Yorkshire is Lieutenant Ian Barlow, 28. All are members of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

The alleged victim complained to Thames Valley Police on November 11 but the

investigation was handed to police at the Ministry of Defence, who are responsible for inquiries relating to MoD or Crown property.

The incident allegedly took place in an accommodation block at the Shrivenham college which is near Swindon. The young woman is a student at another college. The Army's Royal Military College of Science dates from 1772 when it was at Woolwich in south London. It moved to Shrivenham in 1946. The college provides degree courses in defence technology and management for military and civil-

ian undergraduates and post-graduates. The college accepts non-commissioned officers as well as officers.

It has university status and awards science, technology, engineering and management degrees. About 1,000 students a year pass through the college, which occupies a parkland estate between Oxford and Swindon. Most army officers will spend at least some time at Shrivenham, which also provides special courses on terrorist bombs and other explosive devices for officers and NCOs deployed in Northern Ireland.

Willetts report to be issued today

The Commons Committee on Standards and Privileges said last night that it had agreed on a report over the David Willetts affair, but no details would be published until today. On Monday the committee broke up in disarray after failing to agree over the severity of punishment it would recommend for the Paymaster General.

Mandela seals 'new freedom'

President Mandela of South Africa has signed into law the post-apartheid Constitution at a ceremony in Sharpeville that drew a symbolic line under the country's troubled past. Mr Mandela called on those watching the ceremony to join hands "for peace and prosperity". Page 12

By the Times overseas
Australia \$1.20; Belgium 1.50; Canada 1.50; Cyprus 1.20; Denmark 1.50; France 1.50; Greece 1.20; Germany 1.50; Gibraltar 1.20; Hong Kong 1.20; Ireland 1.20; Italy 1.20; Japan 1.20; Korea 1.20; Luxembourg 1.20; Malta 1.20; Netherlands 1.20; New Zealand 1.20; Norway 1.20; Portugal 1.20; Spain 1.20; Sweden 1.20; Switzerland 1.20; Taiwan 1.20; Thailand 1.20; USA 1.20.

The Times on the Internet
<http://www.the-times.co.uk>



TV & RADIO 42-43
WEATHER 22
CROSSWORDS 22-44

Major attempts to deflect the Euro-fire to Labour

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR asserted yesterday that Britain's negotiating position for the Dublin summit this weekend was being undermined by divisions in his party.

In a high-risk move to turn attention from the Tories' internal troubles, the Prime Minister launched a twin offensive — depicting Labour as the party that would cave in to Brussels, and the Tories as the defender of British interests.

At the same time ministers are making plain that he will reject key elements of an EU draft treaty to be discussed on Friday and Saturday.

Mr Major declared in the Commons that other European Governments were expecting "a very easy ride were there to be a Labour government" and the surrender of

positions to which his Government was committed.

Admitting the national interest was being damaged by divisions in his party, he added: "What also damages the national interest is the belief among our partners that many of the positions that we hold would be surrendered by an alternative government."

His decision to try to turn the weekend's talks on Europe into an issue on which he can make ground against Labour will be followed by ministerial attacks which ask which party voters would rather have negotiating for Britain at the Amsterdam summit in June — after the general election.

Despite the Irish EU presidency's decision to skirt some of the more contentious issues in the draft treaty that it has

prepared for Dublin, Conservative sources say Mr Major will take a hard line on some areas. He will tell his partners that Britain under his Government would block:

□ Plans to abolish border controls by the next century
□ Proposals to extend Europol, the police intelligence agency, into a European force
□ Turning security policy into a matter for the EU rather than one for inter-government discussion

□ Any extension of qualified majority voting, thereby weakening the national veto
Strategists admit there is a risk in highlighting the prospect of a Labour government but believe votes can be won by pointing out that party's allegedly softer stance.

Leading article, page 17

Fire in tunnel 'was probably arson'

BY BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS AND JONATHAN PRYNN

A DISTRESS flare thrown by a French protester during a wildcat strike probably started last month's Channel Tunnel fire, investigators into the cause of the blaze now believe.

Although the precise chain of events remains uncertain, arson is rated the most plausible theory, according to sources close to the Euro-tunnel investigating team. The investigation into the arson claims was reported first by The Times on November 21, two days after the fire.

The French prosecution authorities, who are carrying out separate inquiries, are also investigating arson after three weeks of tests on the burnt-out wagons. These are still in the possession of the Boulogne prosecutor handling the inquiry.

The arson theory is supported by preliminary investiga-

tions suggesting that the fire may have started underneath, rather than inside one of the loads. Security staff at the French entrance to the tunnel reported a smouldering lorry on board the ill-fated freight train.

The train had been held up for two hours at Calais by a wildcat strike by Eurotunnel staff protesting against a programme of redundancies announced that day.

Le Shuttle services began again at 7am yesterday with long queues of cars building up at the Folkestone toll booths from 5am. A spokeswoman for the company said most of the services through the day were fully booked. The company is operating about a third of its normal capacity with three departures every two hours and a capacity of about 4,000 cars a day.



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McDonald's big day ends with bunfight in Minsk

FROM RICHARD BRESTON IN MOSCOW

A HISTORIC moment in fast food history turned into a public relations fiasco yesterday when riot police in Belarus tried to break up a crowd of potential customers at the country's first McDonald's restaurant.

The event, billed as a landmark in hamburger history, was supposed to celebrate the expansion of the McDonald's empire to the 100th country in the

world. However, the American fast food chain had clearly not taken into account recent political tensions in Belarus, where demonstrations by young pro-democracy protesters against the rule of President Lukashenko have frequently turned into clashes with security forces.

Trouble started when a crowd of thousands assembled outside the restaurant on Minsk's Francis Skaryn Prospekt, the main thoroughfare frequently used by pro-democracy dem-

onstrators. Attracted by a midnight laser and fireworks display and rumours of free food, the crowd rushed to snap up the first Big Macs.

Then, scores of Omon riot police, the main security force, tried to disperse them with truncheons.

Before the scuffles, McDonald's had touted the event as a watershed in its global expansion, and even hinted that the opening of its fast food outlets was a sign of stability in the world. "Country number 100 is a proud

moment for us — and a marker on a journey which is far from over," said James Cantalupo, the president of McDonald's International. "I am confident we will be celebrating country number 200 in the future."

Pavel Ryabov, McDonald's marketing manager in Russia, insisted the event "went smoothly". But some customers seemed far from satisfied with their first taste of the American dream. "Stuff the police with hamburgers!" shouted one young woman.

TV & RADIO	42-43	LETTERS	17-21	ARTS	31-33	SPORT	38-42, 44
WEATHER	22	OBITUARIES	19	CHESS & BRIDGE	38	MEDIA	21
CROSSWORDS	22-44	SIMON JENKINS	16	COURT & SOCIAL	18	LAW REPORT	20

Single-minded song explains Nigel's empty nest

They could call him the Clitheroe Kid. Nigel Evans (Ribbles Valley) is the fresh-faced and winsome young Tory who represents that town. He has become one of Westminster's most frequent chippers-in. For Madam Speaker, barely a Parliamentary afternoon passes until by Mr Evans's engaging glance or loopy smile, no day closes ungraced by his Welsh lilt.

Unfortunately he always says the same thing. "Does my Rt Hon friend agree that if Labour ever reached power the nation would be cursed with the minimum wage and the social chapter?" The marriage acquires a ritual quality: intoned more for sound than meaning. "Minimum wage'n the social chapter": this is young Nigel's song; increasingly his only song.



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Does the afternoon promise Questions to the Scottish Secretary? Evans is ready. Where would Scotland be, beneath the yoke of the minimum wage'n the social chapter? Are MPs questioning the Agriculture Secretary? Evans is among them. How could farmers survive, ground down by the minimum wage'n the social chapter? Social Security Questions, Treasury Questions... every session rings to the mockingbird sound of the Ribbles Valley song.

Ribbles Valley is a beautiful place. Nigel Evans is a good-looking man. An MP makes a socially desirable spouse. This one is 38 and single. So Westminster-watchers have been saddened by Mr Evans's lack of success in finding a lady who might rejoice in the name of Mrs Evans and share his constituency nest. He is not, they say, unsuspicious to feminine charms. One wonders why womankind is proving unsuspicious to him.

Yesterday afternoon, Nigel encountered the Prime Minister. It being PM's Questions, and John Major having made some headway — turning the "European split" issue back upon a wary Tony Blair — Evans rose. Miss Boothroyd called him. As 1996 expires, here was his chance to ask something new. He asked something old. Did the PM comprehend the full horror of Labour's plans to introduce the minimum wage'n the social chapter? Even kindly Mr Major looked bored. The Opposition looked nauseated. Evans's friends looked resigned.

And all at once I understood why Mr Evans has failed to score with women. Picture the scene: Nigel is entertaining a young lady to a candlelight meal at a discreet table in a small Clitheroe restaurant. Everything has gone swimmingly. Nigel and his companion sip the last of a desert wine, exchanging glances over the guttering flame. For reasons of delicacy the waiter has not disturbed the couple since topping up their glasses. Aware that her escort is a shy boy from the Welsh valleys and taking advantage of this pause in service, the young lady murmurs: "Ooh, isn't the service slow, Nigel. My little flat's just around the corner. Why don't we slip back there and try my perculator? You could help me with it. I've never really known how it's done..."

Bottomley backed by watchdogs on screen violence

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

TELEVISION watchdogs agreed yesterday to tighten up their codes on screen violence, as new research showed that nearly 80 per cent of children regularly watch adult programmes after the 9pm family viewing watershed.

The findings from the market research company Childwise, which are due to be published next week, coincide with growing concerns that existing rules on television violence are not working. Although official surveys show that around 90 per cent of adults are aware of the watershed, parents are clearly not enforcing it.

At a meeting yesterday with Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, Sir Christopher Bland, chairman of the BBC, Sir George Russell, chairman of the Independent Television Commission and Lady Howe, chairwoman of the Broadcasting Standards Council, agreed to Government demands to do more "to educate and inform" parents so they could exercise better control over their children's viewing.

The ITC and the BSC said they would tighten up their codes of practice in 1997. The BBC has recently revised its own "Producers' Guidelines". All three regulators said they would ensure that programme-makers maintain proper standards.

Although she conceded that the amount of television violence is declining, Mrs Bottomley is understood to be particularly concerned about violence cropping up in pre-watershed "family" programmes such as *EastEnders*, *The Bill*, *Neighbours* and *Brookside*.

There are times when violence seems too prominent in the schedules, and this can be disturbing for many viewers, young and old," Mrs Bottomley said.

Mrs Bottomley said more research was needed before she could consider legislation requiring new television to be fitted with electronic scramblers, or V-chips, to prevent sets receiving violent programmes.

Instead, she said she would make funds available for research into improving advance programme information for viewers, whether in listings magazines, in programme trailers and announcements on screen, on text or in other forms.

The *Childwise* survey shows Mrs Bottomley's concerns are not unfounded. The study shows that on school days 50 per cent of children watch television after 9pm rising to 77 per cent at weekends. The survey is based on interviews with 1,014 five to 15-year-olds. This marks a considerable increase on last year's figures, which showed just 30 per cent watching after 9pm on weekdays and 70 per cent at weekends.

"The findings reveal a very high level of viewing of violent films by children with the parent's acquiescence if not their approval," Martyn Richards of *Childwise* said.

After the meeting Lady Howe stressed that research showed people who wanted to be aware of world events were very firm about their need to be informed by television. "They need to know some of the horrors that go on in the rest of the world. They don't want these to be, as it were, censored out in any sense," she said.

Suspicion fell on Gulf War pesticides only two months ago

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE widespread use of organophosphate pesticides to kill disease-carrying insects in the Gulf was added to the long list of potential causes of the so-called Gulf War syndrome only two months ago.

Until the Ministry of Defence discovered that the pesticides had been sprayed liberally over every British army tent in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, suspicion had focused on the collection of vaccines given to all servicemen and women to counter chemical and biological warfare. Service personnel going to the front line in the Gulf were also given tablets called nerve agent pre-treatment sets.

Fears that the 1,100 or so veterans suffering from various diseases had been affected by Iraqi chemicals proved unfounded. President Saddam Hussein did not use his chemical and biological weapons, and British troops were too far away to be affected when US aircraft bombed chemical weapons plants.

Ammunition worth £4m 'lost' by Army in Bosnia

BY MICHAEL EVANS

ARMY munitions, including 450 Milan anti-tank missiles, worth £4 million, are missing from stocks in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the National Audit Office has discovered in its first investigation during an operational deployment of troops abroad.

The NAO said that there had been a breakdown in controls over stores and ammunition in particular. It also disclosed that the Ministry of Defence is spending more than £500,000 a month on renting 90 properties in Bosnia and Croatia. The ministry has launched an inquiry in an attempt to find the lost ammunition, the latest in a series of investigations.

Pesticides bought locally came in metal flasks and the active ingredients were all written in Arabic. There were no English instructions. The MoD team discovered that 4 Brigade could have used a pesticide that contains 60 per cent diazinon.



An American artilleryman covers his face against sand during manoeuvres in Kuwait

US Nobel laureate changes mind on chemical weapon link to illness

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

THE Pentagon, under growing pressure from Gulf War veterans over the possible exposure of American troops to chemical weapons, said yesterday that it was investigating the use of pesticides during the conflict. "It is one of the areas we are looking into to discover whether such agents may be associated with illnesses reported by our soldiers after the Gulf," a Pentagon official said.

At the same time, the American Nobel prize winner who first discounted links between chemical weapons and illnesses reported by Gulf War veterans, said yesterday that evidence only released this year by the Pentagon had forced him to change his mind. Joshua Lederberg, a

scientist and former president of the Rockefeller Institute, said the Pentagon had failed to supply him with details of an incident shortly after the war in which American combat engineers destroyed an Iraqi ammunition depot. The explosion at the sprawling Kamisiyah centre in southern Iraq had potentially exposed thousands of troops to nerve gas.

They particularly defy access to their raw data. It's not surprising that there are goofs-ups of this sort from time to time."

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Ulster pays a £120m price for end of the ceasefire

BY NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

ULSTER paid an extra price for the resumption of terrorism yesterday when the Province's security budget was increased by £120 million at the expense of social programmes.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said he deeply regretted the move, but blamed the IRA and loyalists who brought the Province to a standstill over the summer. Sir Patrick said:

"I would have much preferred to have used this money on, for example, job creation, schools, hospitals and housing. The peace dividend has, alas, been reversed and this has obviously an adverse effect on the provision of public service in Northern Ireland. The IRA and those responsible for the disturbances which occurred last summer bear a heavy responsibility." The

Northern Ireland Secretary was speaking in Belfast as he announced public spending plans.

The security budget has been increased to £934 million for the year 1997-98. The RUC will receive an extra £77 million over the next three years. The Compensation Agency, which pays out to victims of terrorism, will receive an extra £42 million over the same period.

Sir Patrick gave a graphic description of the huge costs of the renewed violence, saying that £17 million paid out for arson claims in July, August and September was enough to build 17 new primary schools or 450 new houses.

The increased spending on security has led to cuts in other areas. The Department of Agriculture budget in the Province next year has been cut by £3 million, housing has been cut by £5 million, and environmental services by £37 million.

The education budget has been increased by £30 million in real terms, but there are cutbacks in key areas. Funding for university research departments has been reduced by £4 million and teachers will no longer receive funding for additional qualifications.

US businessman gives £73,000 to Sinn Fein

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

A LEADING Irish-American businessman contributed three quarters of the funds gathered in six months by Friends of Sinn Fein, the group which raises money in America on behalf of the IRA's political wing.

Charles "Chuck" Feeney and the General Atlantic Group, a Bermuda-registered investment holding company, are identified in documents released yesterday as donating £20,000 (£73,000) to Friends of Sinn Fein in the six months to

October 31. Mr Feeney, who has helped to found a network of retail and duty free businesses, achieved prominence when he took part in a 1994 delegation of Irish-American businessmen to meet Irish political and business leaders.

According to registration documents for the six months, deposited at the Justice Department on Friday by Friends of Sinn Fein, the total funds raised in the period were £160,698.91 (£37,390).

refusing or failing to apply for an opportunity, he said. "Adjudication officers should take into account any relevant matter when deciding whether good cause was shown."

The Labour Party, which is compiling a list of jobcentre advertisements for vacancies in massage parlours, saunas, and kissogram agencies, will attack the guidance at Employment Questions today.

Under the terms of the jobseekers' allowance, claimants risk losing their benefit unless they attend interviews proposed by their jobcentre.

Minister rejects call for rule to protect jobseekers' benefits

BY ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS refused to introduce a rule yesterday to ensure that the unemployed would not lose their benefit if they rejected jobs in the personal services industry.

Labour accused the Government of turning the Employment Service into an "on the job club" after the Employment Minister Eric Ford refused to bring in a new law. Pressure for change came after an unemployed woman in Sheffield was told to attend an interview for a receptionist's post at a male escort agency. She was told she

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'I told her just to take half — she said "we have done it before" and took a whole one'

Leah Betts was warned not to take Ecstasy

By MICHAEL HORNSNELL

LEAH BETTS ignored a warning from her best friend before taking the Ecstasy tablet which killed her as she celebrated her 18th birthday.

Sarah Cargill, 18, told Norwich Crown Court yesterday that she had advised Miss Betts to take only half the tablet because she was concerned that it was stronger than the Ecstasy she had experimented with before. But she swallowed the whole pill and collapsed into a coma around three hours later.

Miss Betts, who died at her parents' home in Litchington, Essex, in November last year, obtained the drug through a network of friends. The court was told that one, Stephen Smith, 19, of Basildon, Essex, admitted being involved in the supply of the drug which killed Leah. But Steven Packman, 18, of Laindon, Essex, denies being involved in its supply.

The tablet was allegedly obtained by Mr Packman, a college student, from an unknown source at Raquel's



Leah Betts: went into coma after taking drug

nightclub in Basildon. The teenager, who bought four tablets for £40, had been asked by Mr Smith, his best friend, to purchase them after he in turn received a request from his girlfriend, Louise Yedley. It was Miss Yedley who had earlier been asked by Miss Cargill to obtain the drugs for the birthday party.

Miss Betts, who knew all of them from school and college days, told her father, Paul, before slipping into the coma that it was Smith who had supplied the drugs.

Mr Betts, a former policeman, listened intently yesterday to the evidence given by Smith, who will be sentenced at the end of Mr Packman's trial.

Andrew Williams, prosecuting, told the court that Miss Betts had died from the idiosyncratic effect of taking Ecstasy. There was nothing chemically wrong with the tablet but "something peculiar" about Miss Betts and the consumption of the drug led to her death, the cause of which

in a matchbox, to Louise Yedley, who handed them over to Sarah Cargill, who gave one to Leah and one to herself at the start of the party.

After Miss Betts's death, Miss Yedley and Miss Cargill both admitted to police their role and were cautioned. Meanwhile, a reporter on *The News of the World* approached Bernie King, the bouncer at the nightclub. A tape recording was made of a conversation between him and Mr Packman in which, the court was told, the defendant "freely and unguardedly" admitted buying the tablets at the club and giving them to Smith. He said that his defence when interviewed by police would be that he remembered nothing of what had happened because he was drunk.

Smith told the jury that he was arrested the day that Leah collapsed and interviewed about supplying the drugs. "I knew the drugs were for Sarah and Leah. That was the understanding. Louise handed over £40 and the order was for four tablets."

"I didn't like the idea of going up to people in the club so I decided that I would wait to see if I was approached. I wasn't approached. I was talking to Steven and he volunteered to go and run the errand."

"He was away for about ten minutes. He came back and said 'I have got the tablets'."

Under cross-examination, Smith denied that he had concealed the story implicating Mr Packman and given evidence against his best friend in order to secure a more lenient sentence for himself. He added: "I can't justify what I did — it was a spontaneous and foolish decision."

Miss Cargill told the jury that Miss Betts lived with her during the week while studying at Basildon College. Miss Cargill said that both of them had begun to take drugs at the start of last year — cannabis, "whizz" (amphetamine), LSD on one occasion, and Ecstasy four times.

Miss Cargill said: "I gave the money to Louise on the Friday. I was told on Saturday



Steven Packman and his mother arriving at Norwich Crown Court where he denies supplying the drug which led to Miss Betts's death at her birthday party

afternoon that I would receive the Ecstasy. Louise handed them to me in a matchbox. There were four Ecstasy tablets."

Miss Cargill told the court that in the past she and Miss Betts had taken Ecstasy tablets which had a dove motif engraved on them. But the tablets Smith had brought

back from the nightclub had an apple motif.

Because of that, Miss Cargill said she had advised Miss Betts only to take half a tablet. "At first I told her just to take half because Stephen had said to Louise over the phone that they were different ones, so I said to Leah only take half," Miss Cargill told the

court. "They were a little bit stronger." She added: "[Leah] said 'we have done it before' so she took a whole one."

Miss Cargill said the tablet she took did not affect her any differently to previous tablets. She said she had seen Leah "drink a few drinks" and she was also smoking cannabis.

The trial continues today.

Drink rival told: you can't have a double

By A STAFF REPORTER

A SUPERMARKET giant was facing legal action last night over claims that its own-brand spirits are too similar to drinks such as Southern Comfort and Jack Daniels.

Asda charges about 30 per cent less for drinks like Deep South and Daniel Boone bourbon. It says the products are "taste-alike not look-alike" and that it will defend itself vigorously against a writ.

In a statement, International Distillers and Vintners UK Ltd said a writ had been issued because Asda's range bore a "very strong resemblance" to well-known brands and could confuse customers.

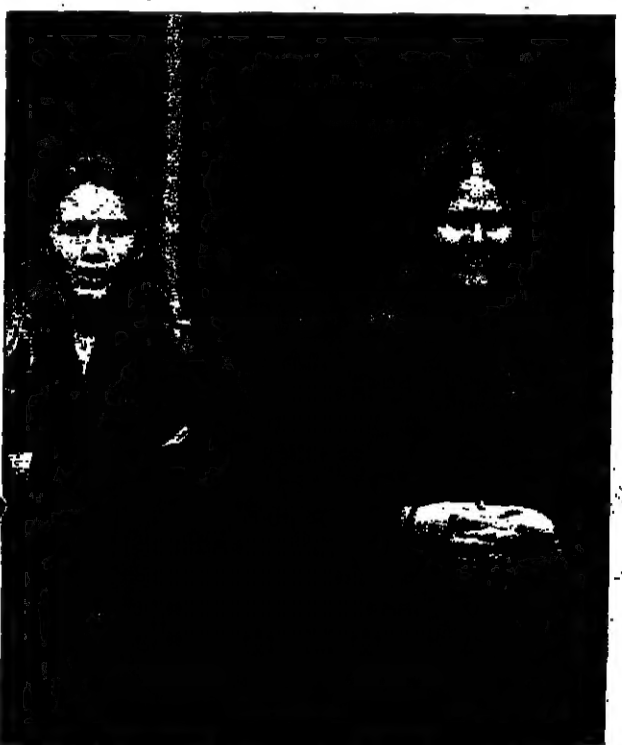
"These brand owners will take whatever action is necessary to protect the integrity of their brands, including trademarks, trade dress and packaging — in fact, all aspects which go to make up the brands' integrity," the statement said.

A writ was served jointly by two Grand Metropolitan companies — The Twelve Islands Shipping Company and GW Archer & Co — the Brown-Forman Corporation and Jack Daniels' Distilleries. The controversial brands also include Asda Peach Schnapps, which is allegedly competing against Archer's, and Asda Windward, a coconut-style spirit similar to Malibu.

Justin King, Asda brand director, said shoppers were enjoying savings of up to a third by taking advantage of the own-brands, which had been on sale for two months. Daniel Boone bourbon sells for £12.23, against £16.73 for brand leader Jack Daniels.

"The price alone means that no one can claim that our customers are confused by what they're buying," said Mr King. "Since the launch of Asda brand spirits in October, our overall sales of spirits have increased while sales of branded equivalents have remained constant. People who were buying the brands are still doing so. The bottom line is that Asda's honest pricing threatens the branded industry's steep profit margins."

"We will be defending the writ vigorously and robustly. Until now, ordinary people have been priced out of the spirits market."



Louise Yedley and Sarah Cargill leaving court. Miss Cargill urged her friend not to take a whole tablet

Schoolgirl has peace talks at No 10 and White House

By ROBIN YOUNG

A POETIC plea for peace carried meetings with John Major and President Clinton for Sophia Clarke, 11, who has a rare genetic disorder. Her mother, Tina, sent the girl's poem, called *Peace at Christmas*, to the television presenter Noel Edmonds. He sent it to the Prime Minister and the US President, who replied almost immediately.

On Christmas Day viewers will see Edmonds, host of BBC's *Noel's Christmas Presents*, surprise Sophia by pretending to be a London tour guide before taking her to 10 Downing Street and to the White House in Washington.

The girl yesterday explained the inspiration for the poem: "I

was thinking about all the people who were dying in Rwanda. I wrote it and my mum put in all the full stops and capital letters. All my friends wanted to come with me to Washington."

Sophia, from Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester, spent 30 minutes with President Clinton and his wife Hillary. The President said: "I was very flattered to be in the poem of a brave young girl from another country. It was very moving. I was delighted to meet her and welcome her family to the White House."

Mrs Clinton said: "It was a pleasure for Sophia to be the first person to see our Christmas decorations. She is an

inspiring child. I hope her determination for peace at Christmas is mirrored around the world."

The Prime Minister said he had enjoyed reading Sophia's poem: "I believe it is a very good Christmas message for world peace."

Edmonds said: "We were genuinely surprised to be granted this chance to go to the White House. It is very rare for them to do this. There is a wonderful moment when Sophia's dad, Peter, says something to Bill Clinton and he has this blank look: Peter has quite a strong accent."

Sophia has Niemann-Pick disease, which affects her co-ordination and balance.

Passenger 'aimed gun at guard'

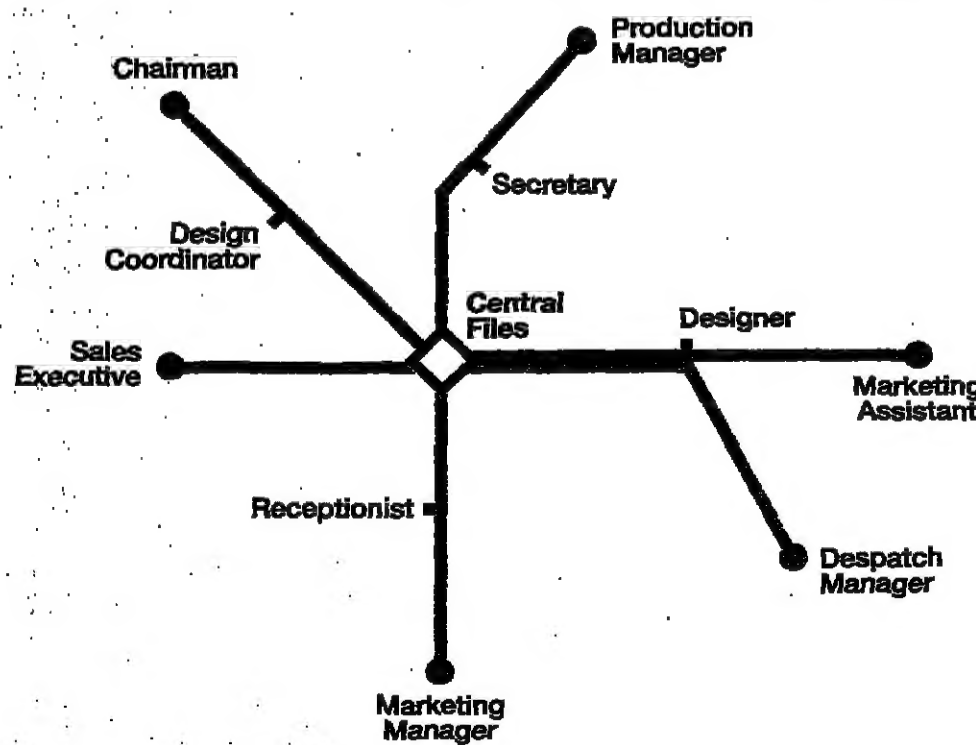
By A STAFF REPORTER

A FORMER marketing executive produced a shotgun and pointed it at a railway guard after being ejected from a train at a remote Scottish station for refusing to stop smoking, a court was told yesterday.

Allan Symington, 36, the guard, told Stirling Sheriff Court that Alexander MacKinnon, 27, was "staggering drunk" when he joined the train from Glasgow to Fort William last October. On several occasions, he said, he and the senior train guard had to ask Mr MacKinnon to obey ScotRail's no-smoking rule. Mr MacKinnon refused and the senior guard asked him to leave the train at Crianlarich station.

Mr Symington said: "On the platform he bent down and opened up a case and started putting together a shotgun. He pointed it at me and asked if he could get back on the train. He seemed quite annoyed. He kicked the train and said ScotRail was rubbish."

The court was told that Mr MacKinnon, who had inherited the £40,000 Purdey shotgun from his grandfather, had moved from London to Edinburgh since the incident. Mr MacKinnon denies causing a breach of the peace, being drunk in charge of a gun and placing members of the public in fear and alarm. The trial was postponed until February.



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Helicopter tracks hunt saboteurs

By MICHAEL HORNSNELL, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

DEVOTEEs of fox hunting have deployed a new weapon in their long-running battle with hunt saboteurs, using a millionaire businessman's helicopter to track and film their tormentors from the air.

David Hart, a special adviser to Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, took to the skies last Saturday after allegations from the Suffolk Hunt that more than 20 saboteurs were attacking hounds with whips and clubs.

For more than an hour, Mr Hart swooped and hovered over the saboteurs as they tried to disrupt the hunt on his 500-acre country estate at Chadacre Hall near Bury St Edmunds. A colleague used a long-focus lens to take photographs of

the events below. Mr Hart, himself a keen huntsman and a former joint-master of the Suffolk, normally uses his dark-green helicopter to ferry guests from London to his country home.

A leading saboteur, Norma Dinnie-Weall, claimed yesterday that Mr Hart had deliberately flown at some of the protesters, forcing them to seek refuge in nearby woods. She said: "It was scary for us because the helicopter hovered 20 feet over our heads. He may have wanted to frighten us but it was more frightening for the horses and wildlife in general."

Mr Hart dismissed suggestions that he had flown close to the protesters as nonsense. He said: "We were simply

observing hunt saboteurs and a colleague was photographing them. The police were well aware of what I was doing."

James Aldous, the hunt chairman, said the colour photographs would be handed over to the police as evidence. He added: "One of the huntmen has already been able to identify a saboteur he says attacked a hound."

Superintendent Howard Cracknell, of the Suffolk police, said: "Three hunt protesters from the London area were arrested for conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace. A report will be forwarded to the Crown Prosecution Service for consideration, but police investigations into all aspects of events that day are still ongoing."



PEACE AT CHRISTMAS by SOPHIRA CLARKE

Here I am sad and alone
Thinking of all the bad things done.
The news is full of doom and gloom,
I hope there will be joy everywhere soon.

People in the nations afar
Will look upon the Christmas star
To make their wish for peace on Earth
And free them from the pain of war.

Will John Major and Bill Clinton help
To make their wish come true?
Everyone would be happy,
Especially me and you.

If all the world could be the same
Far off lands would suffer no pain,
Children everywhere would laugh and play,
If only the world could be this way.

**Row b
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definitely or
probably consider
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This advertisement prepared by Banks Hoggins O'Shea on behalf of the publisher: the Referendum Party, 1st Floor, Dean Bradley House, 52 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF.

Row brews over who will pay for new Thames footbridge

By Marcus Binney

A NEW pedestrian bridge across the Thames in London will be "an elegant razor-sharp blade, a minimalist intervention", according to its designer, the architect Sir Norman Foster.

However, the bridge linking St Paul's Cathedral and the new Tate Gallery of Modern Art at Bankside looks set to create a sizeable row between the Millennium Commission and the City Corporation over who should meet the lion's share of the £10 million cost. The commission is being asked to find 50 per cent, but the corporation's Bridge House Fund, set up in the 12th century when the old London Bridge was begun, is now worth £368 million and is still accumulating.

The bridge's backers say it will be London's elegant answer to the Pont des Arts in Paris, a pedestrian bridge linking the Louvre and the Left Bank. The sculptor Sir Anthony Caro, who is Sir Norman's partner in the project, said: "The design is an extension of sculpture." The 4m-wide structure will be far longer than the Paris bridge: it crosses a 250m stretch of the

Thames and its central span will be a breathtaking 240m. "I can think of no pedestrian bridge with a longer central span," Chris Wise of Ove Arup and Partners, the engineers for the project, said.

The international competition to design the bridge attracted 220 entries. The Foster proposal, unlike most of the other finalists, centres on the axis of St Paul's steps and will briefly interrupt the view of the cathedral dome, which passing riverboats, like to point out to their passengers.

Roger Ridsdill Smith, the project engineer who produced the original idea, said: "We wanted to design an absolutely flat structure. It's like taking a ribbon and pulling it as tight as you can so people can walk on it."

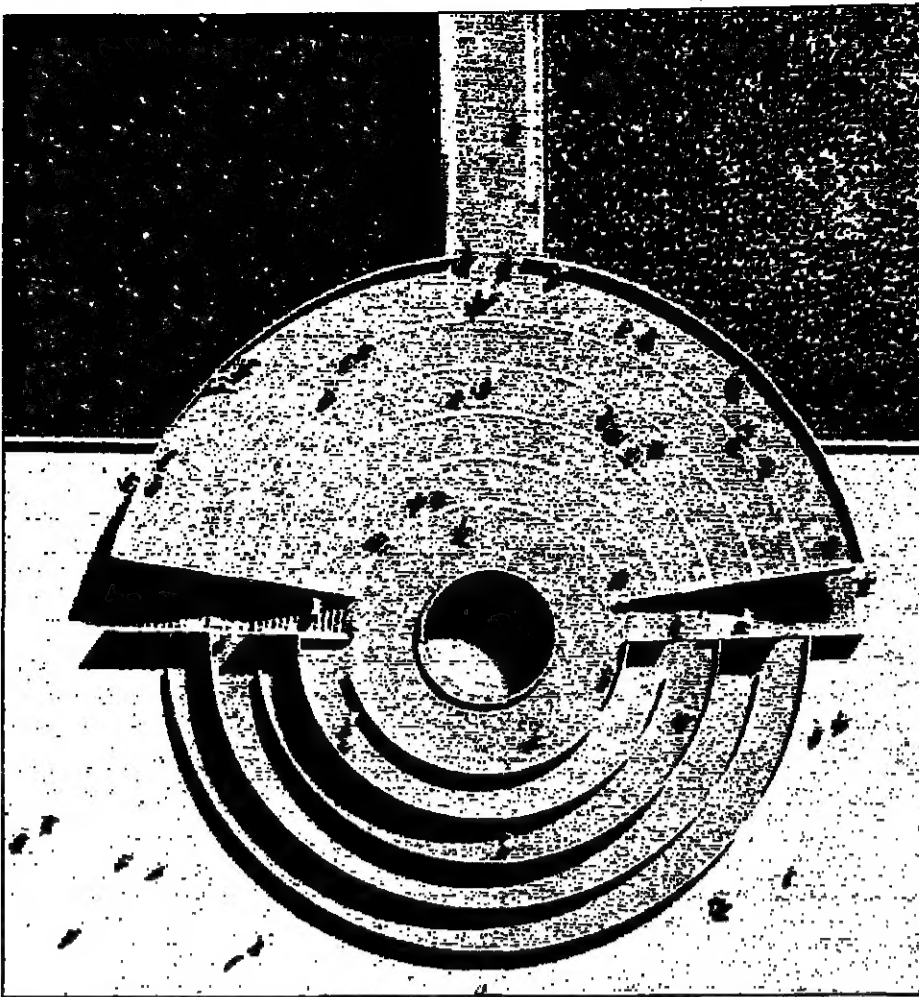
The bridge deck will be of wooden planks, like a pier, allowing a glimpse of the water below. The balustrades, rising to elbow height, will be of stainless steel. Sir Norman said: "One reason why we rejected a covered bridge was that the glass would require constant cleaning. Walking out of doors is one of the pleasures of London and the bridge will offer spectacular new views along the Thames in both directions." No fewer than seven other bridges will be visible. To emphasise its minimal horizontal lines, the bridge will be without lamp-posts or other vertical elements.

Some members and officials of the City Corporation are sceptical about the bridge. They believe that pedestrians are much more likely to use the new walkways proposed for Blackfriars railway bridge, where Railtrack plans to extend Blackfriars station so that it serves both sides of the river.

However, research by MORI indicates that one in three City workers goes to Bankside once a week and half would use the new footbridge.

The Bridge House Trust dates from the time when Peter de Colechurch, a priest and head of the Brethren of London Bridge, began the first stone bridge across the Thames. The money accumulated so well that three other bridges — Blackfriars, Southwark and Tower bridges — were built and are now maintained out of the trust.

Michael Cassidy, chairman of the City's policy and resources committee, said: "For the money to be directed towards a fifth London bridge will require an Act of Parliament." As yet the bridge is without a name. Mr Cassidy said: "If George Soros will give us £10 million, we'll name it after him."



A model of the Thames pedestrian bridge shows its base at the Bankside end

Ill Fiennes may have to abandon expedition

THE future of Sir Ranulph Fiennes's attempt to become the first man to walk alone and unaided across the Antarctic was uncertain last night after it emerged that he was suffering from kidney stones.

Twenty-six days into his journey, the adventurer was said to be in great pain and feeling nauseous, but was melting snow to provide drinking water to help the stones to pass through his body. His sponsors, Dyson, said he had been forced to halt for a time and the next 48 hours would be critical.

Sir Ranulph, who is competing against other international expeditions, has suffered from the condition twice before. Doctors advised him by radio that there was no cause for immediate alarm and that he was taking the necessary medication. However, he may have to abandon his attempt unless his condition improves. Sir Ranulph is attempting to raise £1 million for the breast cancer charity, Breakthrough.

SATURDAY
IN THE TIMES



TEARS AND
TANTRUMS

Why Cupid has a hard time in Hollywood, in the Magazine

SECOND SKIN

How leather has shed its bad girl image, in Weekend

PLUS

THE TOP 100 EASY LISTENING TRACKS

WEEKEND MONEY

AND 10:15, OUR MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG READERS



The bridge looking towards St Paul's

Millennium company seeks to save project

By Damian Whitworth

THE organisers of the Millennium Exhibition at Greenwich meet the Millennium Commission today with pledges of only two-thirds of the private sponsorship that is required.

Millennium Central, the company behind the £700 million scheme, will seek to persuade the commission that if it provides £200 million of lottery cash, other big investors will come forward. However, even if the commission gives the go-ahead, questions would remain over an incoming Labour government's commitment to underwriting the project.

Millennium Central, which presents its plan to Michael

Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, and other commissioners, must contribute £150 million to the cost.

A spokesman said last night that they had £100 million in firm pledges. "DMG, the international sports and leisure consultants who have done soundings in the private sector, say the full £150 million will be secured if the commission pledge their money." The commission might defer a decision on whether to approve the scheme. If it is rejected, Britain's millennium celebrations would be in tatters.

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THE GIFT OF READING

Princess's model entrance marks Galliano's Dior debut

BY GRACE BRADBERY
STYLE EDITOR

AMONG the fashion elite who gathered at the Metropolitan Museum Costume Institute gala, the short-lived presence of Diana, Princess of Wales, inspired a mixture of envy and awe.

Her midnight-blue, silk slip-dress looked like a rather elegant negligee to the uninitiated. But to those in the know, it was the fashion coup of the year — the first House of Dior dress by John Galliano, the British designer who took over in October as head of Christian Dior, France's grandest fashion house.

It was difficult to know who had more to gain — John Galliano and Dior, who in one evening garnered more publicity than most designers achieve in a year, or the Princess, whose fashion profile received an enormous boost.

The evening, held to mark the 50th anniversary of Dior's New Look, was also a triumph for Liz Tilberis, the British editor of the magazine *Harper's Bazaar*, who was chairwoman of this year's ball. Photographed at the Princess's side, she also wore a blue Dior gown — but by Gianfranco Ferré, the designer who stepped down earlier this year.

Though Ms Tilberis and the Princess are friends, it was Bernard Arnault, head of Dior, who invited her to attend the gala and who suggested, when Galliano took over at Dior, that a special dress could be designed for her.

Galliano and his team travelled from Paris to London three times for fittings, making their last visit on November 28, the designer's 35th birthday. He arrived at Kensington Palace to find that the Princess had organised a cake and champagne.

Though the dress may look simple, its construction is elaborate, the delicate bodice trimmed with lace forming a perfectly fitted foundation. It will have taken hundreds of hours for the *petites mains*, or seamstresses, to complete. The



The Princess, with her friend Liz Tilberis, arrives in the slip-dress fitted by Galliano in London over three sessions

cost of an haute couture Galliano dress is generally between £10,000 and £15,000, though given that the Princess was invited to wear the dress by M. Arnault, it is unlikely that she paid.

Yesterday, executives at Dior and Galliano himself were delighted by the impact made by the Princess. "Everybody at the party was concentrating on her, and she was so beautiful — the smile, the face," said M. Danillion. "John said that for him the silhouette and the personality were a symbol of lightness and femininity."

The Princess's dress provides a preview of Galliano's first collection for Dior, which will be unveiled at the haute couture show in Paris in January. Although revealing by royal standards, it may herald a more conservative phase for the designer, who, in his previous job as designer in chief at the House of Givenchy, was renowned for

his injunction to seamstresses to make it "shorter, tighter". Born in Gibraltar to a Spanish mother and a British father, Galliano came to Britain at the age of six and grew up in south London where, his father worked as a plumber. He graduated from St Martin's School of Art in 1984 and, after years of financial insecurity, secured his Givenchy job last year. He is best known for his bias-cut slip dresses and the historical research which goes into many of his clothes.

Galliano's appearance can be eccentric but on Monday night he covered his often dreadlocked hair with a piratical scarf. The Princess had her new, slicker cut, a zig-zag parting, and a softer colouring.

She finished off her outfit with Dior's "Lady Di" handbag and a pearl choker, inset with the sapphire and diamond brooch given to her by the Queen Mother.

Supersonic exit leaves ballgoers in a spin

FROM QUENTIN LEWIS
IN NEW YORK

BALLGOERS at New York's "party of the year" were disappointed when Diana, Princess of Wales, failed even to honour a packed discotheque with a shake of her designer-clad hips.

The Princess, wearied by a long day, made an early departure from the Costume Institute ball. It appeared she may have bitten off more than she could chew when she agreed to attend the Manhattan social gala by "overnighting" it from London on Concorde.

Not even the lure of the Maxi Priest reggae band, nor the promise of cocktail party chat with some of the richest people in the world was enough to keep the Princess at the ball after 11pm (4am GMT). Her premature getaway crushed the dreams of hundreds of New Yorkers who had paid as much as \$1,000 (£600) each in the hope of catching more than a glimpse of the Princess.

In the Metropolitan Museum's Temple of Dendur, transformed for the night into a pumping disco, a multi-timed crowd of party creatures included drag queens, feathered dancers and women covered in the barest weeds. The ball marked the 50th anniversary of Christian Dior's "New Look" and attracted an array of fashion industry names, including Calvin Klein, Christy Turlington, Christian Lacroix and John Galliano, the British designer of the Princess's dress.

Royal seal of approval for spiritual cancer care

THIRTEEN years ago the Prince of Wales opened the Bristol Cancer Help Centre, where the body, mind and spirit of patients with malignant disease can receive support. Any orthodox medical treatment that patients are receiving from the NHS is supplemented with complementary medicine at the centre. Last year, funds were no longer adequate to cope with the increasing patient demand and the centre's future seemed uncertain until the Prince again became actively involved, helping the fundraising effort.

Yesterday the Prince visited to talk to patients, supporters and staff. He said that he had always believed orthodox and complementary medicine should be "synergistic" and that combining them would give patients the best of both worlds. He hoped that the centre would inspire similar integration in other fields of medicine. The centre, financially sound once more, is handling 1,000 patients a year and is planning to expand nationally.

Sheila Hancock, the actress, was once a patient at the centre and spoke of the impact that it had on her life. Nine years ago she was found to be suffering from breast cancer. The diagnosis left her quaking with fear and certain that her life was over. Miss Hancock was advised by a friend to go to the Bristol centre, but did so with reluctance because she could not see how dim-skirted and be-sandled women, together with a diet of carrots, could help her.

She arrived in Bristol to find that the centre was staffed by workers of both sexes who behaved in a straightforward manner and that the food, even if vegetar-



Dr Thomas Stuttford

ian, was extremely good. Other patients provided the mutual support she craved and the staff were able to answer all of her questions, which she felt were not always adequately dealt with in routine consultations.

The counselling helped her to face up to the cancer and to reorganise her time so that she could spend the rest of her life as she wanted to live it. Miss Hancock said: "In retrospect, I'm glad that I had cancer. It made me think and thereafter, with the help of the centre, I learnt to change my previously ludicrous lifestyle."

The centre is still equated in the public's mind with carrot juice and was therefore particularly busy yesterday, not only coping with the Prince's visit but with calls

from across the country about the *Times*' report that the amount of beta-carotene in three to four carrots could boost the immune system's ability to destroy cancer cells.

Fortunately for the centre's staff, the readers had not seen the other recent report by Dr Christopher Redhead in the *Journal of Food*, which described the new-found ability of scientists to engineer genetically carrot-rich foods such as tomatoes, red peppers and carrots so that they will contain three times the usual amount of these anti-oxidant vitamins.

The Bristol centre never was just about carrot juice, but if it had been it would still have been offering a useful service.

Prince treks across country for premiere

THE Prince took to the skies to join hundreds of "Trekkies" yesterday at the premiere of *First Contact*, the new Star Trek film.

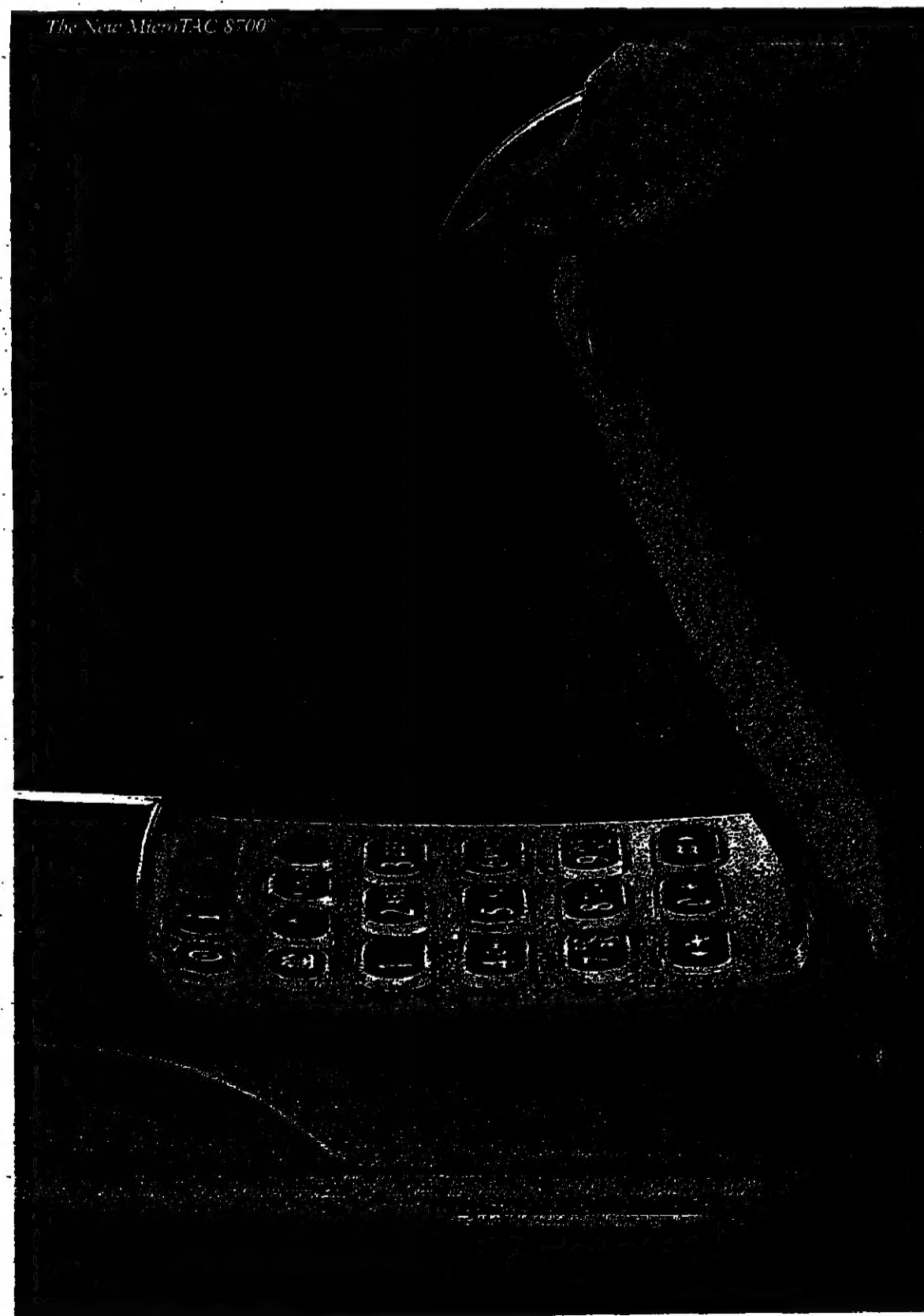
After his former wife's transatlantic dash to fulfil two commitments on Monday, the Prince's challenge was more modest: he managed the 120-mile journey from Bristol to London by helicopter with plenty of time to prepare for the engagement at the *Empire*

cinema in Leicester Square. The film is the first without any of the cast from the original 1960s TV series. The Prince met Patrick Stewart, the British actor who stars as captain of the *Enterprise*, and other cast members.

First Contact reached the top of the American film charts last month, taking £18.6 million at the box office in its first weekend.

Review, page 33

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INTERNATIONAL

LOW COST INTERNATIONAL CALLS

Doctors pay for failure to apply for lottery grants

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of thousands of pounds have been lost to medical research because charities failed to apply for grants from the National Lottery, it emerged yesterday.

Doctors and scientists had been deterred from applying by misleading reports that the National Lottery Charities Board was not interested in funding medical research, members of the board said.

The board announced yesterday the first grants aimed at medical and social research charities. A total of 56 charities, from 243 that applied, received £8.6 million.

The Cancer Research Campaign, one of the most vocal critics of the lottery's effect on charitable giving, received £477,000 to investigate cancer genes. The Children's Liver Disease Foundation received £189,000 for a project to develop an artificial liver machine, similar to a kidney machine.

Tenovus, the Cardiff cancer charity whose income was cut by £1.5 million a year after the lottery forced it to abandon its scratchcard game, was awarded £242,000 for a breast cancer project.

Among the 204 medical charities that applied — a third of all those in Britain — there were 43 successful applicants, who shared £6.7 million. This is less than 5 per cent of the total of between £150 million and £160 million to be handed out in the current round for projects in the health, disability and care fields.

The board is to give the bulk of the money to services for patients and clients. A series of announcements about the beneficiaries is to be made over the next six weeks.

David Sieff, chairman of the board, said 22 per cent of the medical and social research applications had been successful, rising to 65 per cent among members of the Association of Medical Research Charities. Every project considered of sound design by the board's panel of scientific assessors received a grant.

"We can only fund those who put in bids to us. One of the misconceptions that has got around is that medical research charities cannot bid. A very important message to get across is that anyone can apply. All they have to do is look at the theme of the current programme and frame a project to fit within it," Mr Sieff said.

Professor Ingrid Allen, chairwoman of the medical research advisory panel, said: "We did not have all that many applicants for medical research grants. We recommended funding of all the good scientific applications."

"It would have been nice if we could have recommended more. The reason why more did not apply needs investigation."

Professor Sir Eric Stroud, a member of the board, said doctors and scientists had been put off by early reports that lottery money was to be focused on social welfare and that medical research was to be ignored.

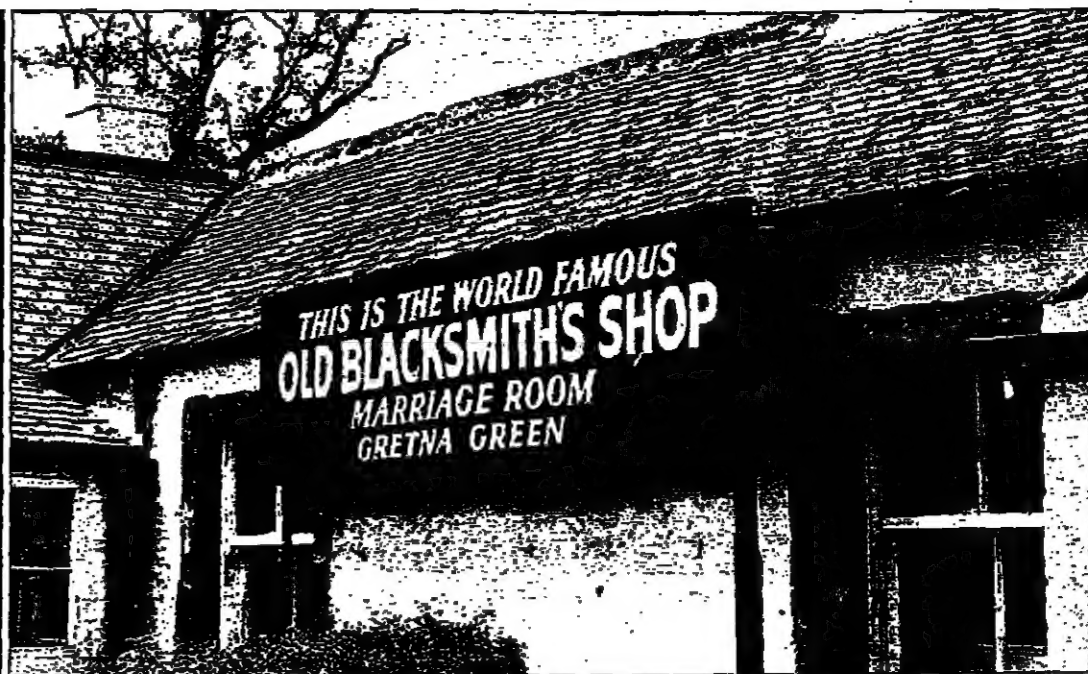
"I think it got into the subconscious of doctors and they felt we weren't interested so they didn't make inquiries. They had to apply through a charity but there were plenty of charities willing to make an application. It is sad."

The National Lottery announced its second marketing partnership — with Freemans home shopping. The catalogue company has teamed up with Camelot, the lottery operators, to send customers vouchers which are exchangeable for Lucky Dip tickets and an entry into the lottery draw.

Marriage records of eloping couples are put up for auction



David Lang, who made a business from eloping couples, and a "marriage room" that is now part of Gretna Green's tourist trade



From Gretna Green, a runaway best-seller

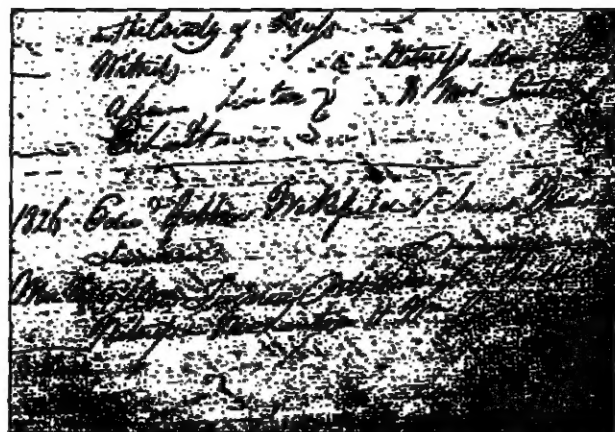
By ROBIN YOUNG

IT WAS the first stop on the path of true love or the last on the road to scandal. For over a century, runaway couples headed to Gretna Green for a marriage with no questions asked. And the man who cornered the high-class end of the market was David Lang.

The ledgers of his family business in elopement contain enough plots for a library of bodice-ripping romantic novels, ranging from the secret wedding of a former Lord Chancellor to the duplicitous abduction of a rich young heiress.

Today up to a hundred libraries, collectors and antique dealers are expected to join the bidding as the Lang family papers from 1794 to 1895 are auctioned in Newcastle upon Tyne. Andrew McCoull, a partner with auctioneers Anderson and Garland, said: "There has been fantastic interest."

The collection of four hard-bound ledgers, two soft-bound registers, 21 bundles of loose papers and six envelopes of record slips and certificates demonstrate the business that built up in the Dumfries



The wedding of Edward-Gibbon Wakefield and Ellen Turner, left, was to be the death of Lang. Lord Erskine, right, whose wedding nearly cost him his freedom



border town after English law required wedding bans to be read three times before marriage. Gretna was the easiest destination to reach in Scotland, where ceremonies did not need parental consent, and couples simply declared their wish to be married in front of witnesses.

David Lang, a former pedlar, became a Gretna "priest", simply noting down the date and names. One of the most famous scandals contained in papers is the 1818 wedding of

the widower Lord Erskine, formerly Lord Chancellor, and his young housekeeper, Mary Buck, mother of his illegitimate child. His family tried to prevent their wedding and his sons were so opposed that they tried to have their father committed to an asylum. When he fled his Sussex home with his bride and headed for Scotland, he escaped pursuit by dressing as an old woman. He died five years later.

In 1826, another Gretna

Green scandal shocked Britain. Edward Gibbon-Wakefield, a dashing confidence trickster who had worked as a British Embassy official, presented himself at the Liverpool boarding school of a 15-year-old heiress with a forged letter to the governors saying that her mother was ill.

He persuaded the girl, Ellen Turner, daughter of a Cheshire factory owner, to accompany him, saying her inheritance depended on her marrying in Gretna Green.

The impressionable teenager fell in love with him on the way. After their wedding, the couple fled to France but her relatives caught them in Calais and persuaded the girl to leave her new husband.

Gibbon-Wakefield returned to England to face trial with his accomplice, his brother William, and both were jailed for three years. The question of the legality of the marriage was so involved that it was cancelled by special Act of Parliament.

Gibbon-Wakefield ultimately carved a successful career as financial adviser to colonial governments in Australia and New Zealand. David Lang was not so lucky. During the trial, he caught a cold and died, aged 71. His business was continued by his son Simon and grandson William.

Mr McCoull said: "After William died in 1896, the records passed to his son Simon, who ran a grocery in Gateshead. A solicitor who bought the records recognised their importance, and spent years preparing indexes. This is first time such records have been auctioned on the open market."

Airline tries haute cuisine

British Airways is moving away from the despised "plastic" airline meal. Cabin crews, who are receiving training from the chef Michel Roux, are cooking passengers' meals to order. The new meals, introduced yesterday in first class on BA's 72 long-haul routes, mean that passengers can have anything from stuffed aubergine to capuccino mousse. If successful, the scheme will be extended.

Police accused

Seven police officers were remanded on bail, accused of offences arising from clashes in east London with New Age travellers on their way to a music festival. They will appear at the Old Bailey next month.

Kosher beer

A German brewer has launched Europe's first kosher beer. Herrnhäuser Kosher Pilsner, brewed in Hanover using barley left untouched during Passover, is certified by the Federation of Synagogues in London.

Player banned

The Liverpool winger Mark Kennedy was fined £600 and banned from driving for a year after a breath test showed he was nearly twice over the limit. He was recently fined £1,500 for careless and inconsiderate driving at Southport.

Vienna arrests

Police in Vienna investigating the shooting of two Manchester United supporters arrested a third man and recovered a pistol after a house search. The 37-year-old was later released. Two other men are due in court today.

Celery sent off

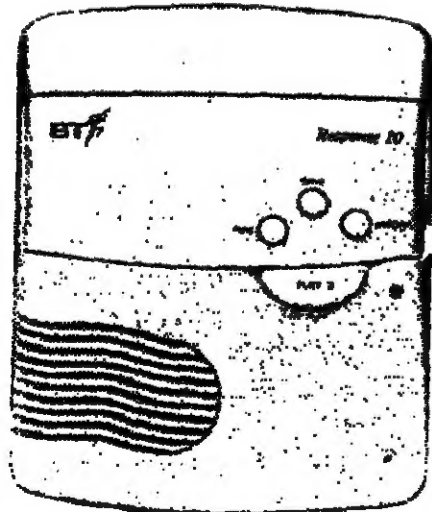
Football fans at Second Division Gillingham are being subjected to celery searches. Anyone caught in possession is threatened with a life ban because of a trend among fans to wave sticks of it while chanting an obscene anthem.

Surprise her with a little designer number this Christmas.

Response 90 Combined Digital and Tape Answering Machine

2 pre-recorded outgoing messages. 30 minute recording time, including memory capacity alert

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Response 10 Answering Machine

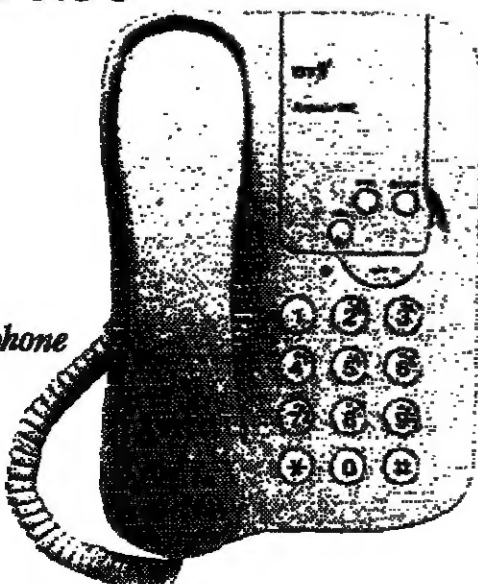
Listening-in facility. Remote access. Pre-recorded message

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Response 100 Combined Telephone and Answering Machine

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Response 60 Digital Answering Machine

Voice prompts to aid set up. Pre-recorded outgoing message. Message auto-save and selective delete.

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MPs win a better deal on scrutiny of European laws

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

BACKBENCH MPs have been promised better information about European Union laws after the row over Commons scrutiny of documents on the proposed single currency.

MPs from all parties reacted angrily last month to the Government's refusal to allow a full Commons debate on the Brussels documents, which related to preparations for monetary union. They protested that the lack of Commons scrutiny and the poor service given by some government departments had eroded Parliament's influence over European law-making.

New Whitehall guidelines will now make officials adopt a more positive attitude to such documents and pass them more swiftly to MPs. Senior civil servants will attend training courses on how best to keep MPs well informed.

Tony Newton, Leader of the Commons, admitted that there was "a cause for concern" in the way that some Whitehall departments dealt with European legislation. He wrote to the European Legislation Select Committee, which led complaints about scrutiny failures, saying that the committee was "not unreasonable" in refusing to clear EU documents when it did not have the official text.

Although some departments were "alert and skilled"

in dealing with European documents, Mr Newton acknowledged that more work was needed to ensure that this standard is more consistently achieved by all departments involved in EC business.

MPs praised the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food for its work on Europe, but criticised the Foreign Office for failing to keep informed. The committee highlighted "administrative failure", protesting about ministerial letters to them being wrongly addressed, sent by second-class post and even going astray. It said that, although some departments handled EU papers competently, "this is a little like reassuring a motorist that his tyre is only flat at the bottom".

Mr Newton said that the Government took the failure very seriously and would order a review of training and guidance to departments to make sure that standards were "more consistently achieved". He conceded that more needed to be done and said that training seminars would be introduced to improve Whitehall procedures. The 23-strong European Secretariat of the Cabinet Office planned to start training civil servants early next year.

However, he rejected a recommendation by the committee to change the Commons

procedure which was at the centre of the dispute over three controversial EU documents on the single currency. Ministers suffered an embarrassing defeat on the issue after they tried to sideline debate on the proposals.

Another of the committee's complaints is that ministers have reached political agreement at meetings with their European counterparts despite there being a parliamentary "scrutiny reserve" preventing the Government making deals on Britain's behalf until MPs have given the plans clearance.

Mr Newton said that the device, which last week restricted Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, at a meeting of EU finance ministers, was sometimes "accidentally" lifted, but he added: "It is important for confidence in the system as a whole that even occasional failures are avoided."

Peers call for royal yacht decision

By JAMES LANDALE

TORY peers attacked the Government last night over its failure to decide on a replacement for the Royal Yacht Britannia. More than ten peers, including several former naval officers, urged ministers to act and make their plans clear.

The Government announced two years ago that the yacht would be decommissioned at the end of next year after concern about its rising running costs, now £10 million a year. As well as being the Royal Family's cruise ship, Britannia is used to promote British exports and many businessmen fear the loss of markets if no replacement is found. Contracts worth more than £2 billion have been signed on board in the past five years.

Various consortiums have put forward proposals for a replacement and in July the Defence Select Committee called for a new yacht to be built in a British shipyard by



2000. But ministers have yet to decide what kind of replacement they want and how it could be funded.

In a short debate yesterday, Lord Ashbourne, a former naval officer and chairman of the all-party Royal Yacht parliamentary group, asked: "Has not the

Government sat on the fence for long enough?" The Royal Yacht was a symbol of British prestige and boosted exports.

The Government should build a new yacht with a dual role of royal duties and export promotion, with the costs shared between Whitehall departments. Bucking-

ham Palace would pay for the Royal Family's use.

Lord Motistone, a retired naval captain, said a decision was needed urgently so that a new yacht could be ready for the 50th anniversary of the Queen's coronation in 2002. "Every day that is wasted makes it less likely for us to

achieve that." Other peers backing the call included Lord Amherst of Hackney, vice-commander of the Royal Yacht Squadron, Lord Balfour, a former merchant seaman, and Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, vice-chairman of the all-party maritime group.

We are not afraid of isolation in EU, says Brown

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN insisted yesterday that a Labour government would not allow a weakening of the British veto in crucial areas of European Union policy.

The Shadow Chancellor said that his party would retain the veto on immigration and asylum, foreign affairs, border controls and taxation, even if it meant Britain being isolated.

Mr Brown, seeking to minimise differences with the Tories on European policy, also repeated Kenneth Clarke's assertion on Monday that countries would not be able to decide whether to join a single currency until 1998 at the earliest.

John Major has tried to highlight policy differences between the two parties by claiming that Labour would give up the veto. But in an interview with BBC Radio 4's Today, Mr Brown said: "I think it has got to be made absolutely clear that this is a myth created by the Conservatives because they want to believe that other parties have problems when it is in their own hands."

He added: "If we have to stand up to our partners and say they are wrong, we will. Even if we are in a minority of one we will say that."

But Robin Cook, Shadow Foreign Secretary, later admitted that a Labour government would extend qualified majority voting in some areas. He reaffirmed that Labour would be prepared to see a weakening of the veto on social, regional, environmental and industrial policy.

Mr Cook argued that if the European Union were enlarged to become a Europe of 25 or 26 nation states, they could not all be admitted

clutching their own vetoes. "If you want reform, you do have to have majority voting to stop one, perhaps small, nation obstructing progress," he said. "We want to see reform in the structural funds, and across areas of agriculture policy, and that will mean there will have to be some majority votes against those individual nations that stand in the way."

Labour sources denied Tory assertions that Labour wanted to give up all Britain's opt-outs while admitting that the party was against exclusions in principle. Sources claimed that a 1995 Labour policy document arguing against opt-outs referred to the social chapter opt-out, rather than issues such as monetary union or border controls. Labour was in favour of a single currency in principle but "we reserve the right to join when it is in our economic interests".

But Labour sources say the party may allow policy on border controls to be brought within the European Union, as long as Britain was not required to participate. Under the draft treaty to be discussed at Dublin, all border controls would be abolished in the EU by the end of the century.

The key areas where the two parties differ are over the powers of the European Parliament and the employment chapter. Labour supports an extension of the powers of the European Parliament so that it would be able to amend legislation agreed by the Council of Ministers through qualified majority voting.

Labour supports the employment chapter, which would set the achievement of high employment as a complementary objective to monetary union. The Government is strongly opposed to the plan.

Taxpayer faces bigger bill for fewer quangos

BRITAIN has fewer quangos than ever but the cost to the taxpayer has never been higher (Valerie Elliott writes).

The Government is funding 1,194 quangos with £18.2 billion this year compared with £3 billion in 1979. This is the total amount spent on running costs, including salaries, expenses and awards.

But in the past year 96 bodies were wound up including the Nutrition Task Force.

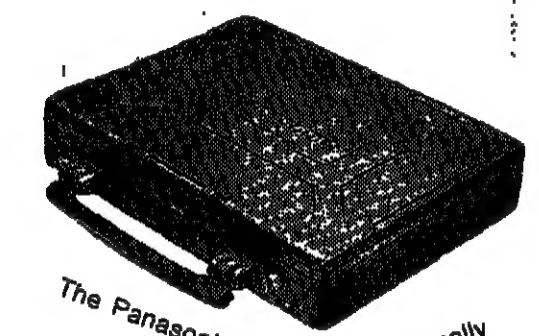
IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons from 9.30am, backbench debates including: Unemployment, education and employment; 2.30pm, education and employment; 3.30pm, education and employment; 4.30pm, education and employment; 5.30pm, education and employment; 6.30pm, education and employment; 7.30pm, education and employment; 8.30pm, education and employment; 9.30pm, education and employment; 10.30pm, education and employment; 11.30pm, education and employment; 12.30am, education and employment; 1.30am, education and employment; 2.30am, education and employment; 3.30am, education and employment; 4.30am, education and employment; 5.30am, education and employment; 6.30am, education and employment; 7.30am, education and employment; 8.30am, education and employment; 9.30am, education and employment; 10.30am, education and employment; 11.30am, education and employment; 12.30am, education and employment; 1.30am, education and employment; 2.30am, education and employment; 3.30am, education and employment; 4.30am, education and employment; 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Kennedy's mistress had abortion

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

A FORMER mistress of the late John Kennedy has disclosed that she became pregnant by him in 1963 and, with his agreement, had an abortion.

Judith Exner was then a good-time girl in her mid-20s who had been introduced to the Kennedy "Camelot" by Frank Sinatra. Kennedy used her to convey messages to the Chicago mobster, Sam Giancana. Her affair with the President, which she first discussed openly in the 1970s, lasted for two years. It ended not long after she tearfully telephoned Kennedy at the White House to tell him that she was pregnant. "I said 'Jack, just about the worst thing I can tell you has happened. I'm pregnant,'" she said. "There was this quiet sound, almost a thud."

Mrs Exner, a Roman Catholic like Kennedy, has gone public about the abortion as she struggles with terminal cancer. She told her secret to Liz Smith, the New York gossip writer, whose account of the aborted pregnancy will appear in the next issue of *Vanity Fair* magazine.

"I sat on this secret because I guess I was too ashamed," said Mrs Exner, who at the time of the affair went under her maiden name, Judith Campbell. "I never, never intended to tell this story... it was too sordid for a nice Catholic girl like me. But now, before I die, I think the



Judith Exner, the President's mistress, top right, her lover John Kennedy, and Sam Giancana, who helped to find doctor



Hospital, after Kennedy's suggestion that Giancana might be able to find her a doctor.

She showed Ms Smith the hospital bills for her two-day treatment, which she has kept. "I remember the doctors," she said. "They treated me as if I didn't exist. I was a body... I used to wonder if the doctor's hands were shaking when he thought of the consequences if things didn't go right."

John Davis, a cousin of Jacqueline Kennedy and author of books about the Kennedys, said yesterday: "This news of an abortion is not surprising, given the considerable amount of time Judith Campbell spent with JFK."

Mr Davis added that Mrs Exner's disclosures may damage the Kennedy myth in some quarters of American life. "John Kennedy's name has taken a fair battering in the past few years, so it might not affect his reputation everywhere, but there will certainly be dismay in Catholic circles and in the Irish-American constituency."

After the affair, the White House closed ranks against the woman who had for two years been able to win Kennedy's time and affections. Kennedy turned instead to the actress Marilyn Monroe, another affair which the American press overlooked. Dave Powers, a Kennedy aide, when asked later about the woman who had, albeit briefly, carried the President's child, replied that he had never heard of any Campbell — "except the soup."

Camelot should be demystified and the Kennedy legend examined for its reality."

She discovered she was pregnant after she and Kennedy went to bed at the White House in December 1962 — the last time they made love. She said she did not sleep with any other man at that time. When she discovered her

pregnancy late the following month she was "stunned", because she had thought she was not able to carry children. Abortion was not then legal in the United States.

The affair has been well chronicled. Many biographers have examined the relationship, and have dwelt on details such as the time Kennedy,

shortly before he became President, suggested a *ménage à trois* to his fiancée. She turned him down.

Mrs Exner told Ms Smith that when she telephoned Kennedy to break the news "his first remark was — and he knew instantly he said the wrong thing — 'What are you going to do?' Then he correct-

ed himself and said, 'I'm sorry. What are we going to do?' He was 'very sweet' to her."

She said that he offered to let her keep the baby but that it had not been possible to do so, not least because she felt she was being watched constantly by the FBI. She had the abortion at Chicago's Grant

Ghanaian lobbies UN for top job

FROM JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK

THE head of United Nations peacekeeping tried yesterday to fulfil a two-year mission to succeed Boutros Boutros Ghali as the Secretary-General.

Kofi Annan, the UN under-Secretary-General for peacekeeping, was expected to emerge as the leading contender to replace Dr Boutros Ghali as the 15-nation Security Council began secret balloting yesterday to pick a successor.

The soft-spoken Ghanaian, who provided steady leadership through the UN peacekeeping missions in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and is popular at UN headquarters, has been quietly preparing his move for the top job for months. The conventional wisdom is that he is in cahoots with the Americans, who used their Security Council veto to prevent Dr Boutros Ghali from being elected for a second term.

Mr Annan was made the head of peacekeeping in March 1993 when the United States was looking for a co-operative official with whom it could work on transferring the Somalia peacekeeping mission to UN command. He was also sent to Bosnia at the end of last year to supervise the handover of the peacekeeping operation there to a Nato-led force. Washington has insisted that the next Secretary-General, who takes office on January 1, must be committed to reforming the organisation to restore the confidence of US Congress, which refuses to pay its outstanding UN dues.

Mr Annan has run a stealth campaign for the top UN job



Annan: popular among UN staff in New York

that has put him at odds with his boss. It is commonly agreed that he would have had to step down if the Secretary-General had secured even one more year in office.

The main obstacle to Mr Annan getting the top post appears to be Dr Boutros Ghali's backer, France, which is locked in a battle of wills with America on a number of issues, ranging from the control of Nato's southern command to multinational policy in Central Africa.

France insists that the next UN chief be a francophone and all three of Mr Annan's rivals for the post come from French-speaking African countries: Amara Essy, Foreign Minister of the Ivory Coast; Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, a former UN envoy from Mauritania; and Hamid Algabid of Niger, head of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Mr Annan also speaks French.

However, diplomats said that if Mr Annan secured a convincing lead in the first round of secret balloting, France would come under strong pressure to drop its opposition to him.

US and China plan joint exercises to aid detente

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

IN AN unprecedented display of co-operation with Peking, the Pentagon said yesterday that American servicemen were planning to hold joint military exercises with the Chinese as part of a new era of shared defence strategy.

General John Shalikashvili, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said a number of "confidence-building" measures had been agreed between Pentagon officials and a visiting delegation led by General Chi Haotian, China's Minister of National Defence.

Military officials agreed a "rules of the road" procedure for air and naval operations to avoid possible confusion or future confrontation. The plan is to create a line of communication that would avoid snap decisions on the part of naval commanders in the field.

The defence chiefs also discussed the possibility of periodic meetings between both sides and some "simple" joint exercises, such as search and rescue in the South China Sea.

"We are trying to encourage China in a strategic dialogue as part of a military-to-military relationship," said General Shalikashvili. He noted that the Chinese had agreed to formalise a draft agreement during a series of future working groups with their American counterparts.

The proposed agreement, a sign that Washington has come to view the Chinese as a military power approaching the strength of the former Soviet Union, brought immediate bipartisan attacks from Congress. The United States had a similar accord with the navy in the USSR to prevent confrontations at sea from growing into nuclear war.

In an extraordinary show of defiance, Republican members of Congress boycotted a breakfast held for the Chinese Defence Minister on Capitol Hill yesterday. They have been particularly incensed by signs of détente during the ten-day visit of General Chi, who commanded the Army during the Tiananmen Square killings in June 1989.

After the general was pictured with President Clinton on the eve of Human Rights Day yesterday, Chris Smith, a

Atheist linked to missing money

FROM BROWNWEN MADDOX
IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S most famous atheist, who disappeared over a year ago, vanished at about the same time as \$625,000 (\$390,000) disappeared from two organisations she controlled, it has emerged.

Madalyn Murray O'Hair, whose federal case in 1993 resulted in the removal of prayers and Bible readings from American state schools and made her a household name across the United States, disappeared in August last year from Austin, Texas. Her younger son Jon and her granddaughter Robin, whom she had adopted as her daughter, disappeared at the same time.

Tax statements from two of the five organisations she ran with the assistance of her son Jon to promote atheism and the separation of Church and State, show that assets have gone missing.

The filings from American Atheists Inc and United Secularists of America contradict statements made by atheist officials in the past year that all corporate assets were intact after the Murray O'Hairs' disappearance.

The tax returns also disclose a pattern of financial transactions in New Zealand dollars and securities leading to speculation that the missing people have gone to New Zealand.

However, American colleagues have not lost faith in their former heroine. Ellen Johnson, the head of American Atheists Inc, has dismissed suggestions that the trio absconded illegally with the money, saying that she believes they are the victims of foul play.

"This idea that Madalyn is perhaps sitting on a beach somewhere drinking a Mai Tai is so stupid as to be insulting," she has been reported as saying. "These are the most decent, honest people I have ever known in my life," she has added. "It is all extremely sad."

In September, Bill Murray, Ms Murray O'Hair's estranged older son, together with Robin's father, who is the publisher of a conservative Christian newsletter, filed a "missing persons report", but Austin detectives say that they have made no progress in the case.

Call for extended peace role

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S top general hinted yesterday that Nato should consider the possibility of Nato troops playing a role in previously uncharted regions such as the Middle East or Africa.

"The new Nato is there to serve the interests of its members in bringing stability and peace to such areas and to help with humanitarian disasters which otherwise overwhelm normal humanitarian organisations," he said.

General Shalikashvili said that America would be less inclined to risk casualties in

Corruption claims tarnish film awards

FROM GILES WHITTELL
IN LOS ANGELES

THE organisation behind Hollywood's second most important awards ceremony has been denounced in *The Washington Post* as a "corrupt little band" whose prizes are all but for sale.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association, which presents the Golden Globes each January in a ceremony widely seen as a dry run for the Oscars, consists mainly of part-timers in thrall to celebrities and the studios' largesse, according to the *Post*.

Feted by such stars and directors as

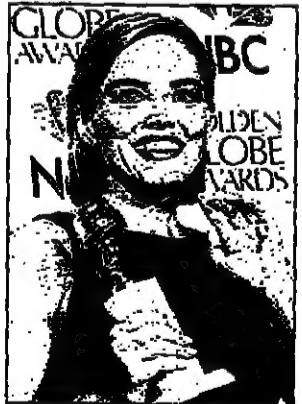
Sharon Stone and Rob Reiner, the 88-member association enjoys international television coverage and the power to make and break careers on Golden Globe night. A few members are respected writers on film. Most are not.

Mahfouz Doss, a member who says he writes "about two dozen articles a year" for various Egyptian publications, worked as an engineer until 1978 and has been living off investments since. Tony Ponce runs a marketing company by day but is linked to Czech and Costa Rican publications. Munawar Hosain is a general Bangladeshi correspondent who earned his living until recently selling

electronic appliances. Members must produce four published articles on film-related topics a year, but applicants from mainstream newspapers are routinely rebuffed. A *Le Monde* correspondent said she has been rejected "four or five times".

Those who are accepted attend screenings, receive gifts and are often flown to lavish junkets at the studios' expense as films are released.

Last year Sharon Stone sent each member a handwritten "thank you" letter after a press conference for her film *Casino*. She was later the surprise winner of a Best Actress Golden Globe.



Sharon Stone and Golden Globe award in January



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Nato countdown starts for entry of East Europeans

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN BRUSSELS

THE Nato alliance yesterday started the countdown to the entry of former Soviet bloc states, promising Moscow it would not deploy nuclear forces in them but also making clear that Russian objections would not halt the expansion.

Against the background of a sharp US-French dispute over a revamped Nato command, alliance foreign ministers fixed next July 8 for a Madrid summit that will invite the first Central European states to join, with entry planned for 1999. The first former Warsaw Pact members to be admitted are expected to be Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, with Romania and Slovakia as possible candidates from the other eight that have applied.

The decision, which in effect marks a point of no return in the transformation of the old Cold War alliance, was accompanied by new overtures to Russia to drop its fierce resistance to Nato's move eastwards. These included a pledge not to station nuclear forces in the new member states — a largely symbolic gesture since Nato's nuclear umbrella is provided by sea-borne weapons.

Nato also wants to involve Russia more closely in Euro-

pean security and is prepared to give it veto-power over some joint operations, such as peacekeeping. Russia's successful participation in the Bosnian peace force, re-launched this week as Sfor — Stability Force — is hailed by Nato as the model for a future East-West military partnership.

The Americans, also worried about the future of those Eastern European states that will not be given membership tickets, want to create a North Atlantic Co-operation Council as a bridge to non-members.

While Warsaw, Budapest and Prague cheered yesterday's move, the Kremlin reiterated its hostility. Yevgeny Primakov, its Foreign Minister, met Warren Christopher, the retiring US Secretary of State, and other ministers from the 16-member alliance. "Russia's position on this issue remains firm and rather rough," said Sergei Yastrzhembsky, spokesman for President Yeltsin. It was fantasy to suggest Russia was resigned to Nato expansion.

Senior British officials said the Russians were acquiescing but were eager not to give any public acceptance that Nato's enlargement was inevitable.

Russian diplomats, who fear the Clinton Administra-

tion is toughening its line, are worried by the appointment of the Czech-born Madeleine Albright as Secretary of State in succession to Mr Christopher. "She's a very hard lady," said a Russian official. "We don't forget she was the protégée of Zbigniew Brzezinski." Mr Brzezinski, National Security Adviser to President Carter, was the Kremlin's *bête noire* in the late 1970s.

Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, and Hervé de Charette, the French Foreign Affairs Minister, called for intense efforts to satisfy the Kremlin's anxieties and produce a joint charter before the Madrid summit.

In the increasingly acrimonious dispute between Paris and Washington over the revamping of Nato's command structure, France is insisting that America gives up Nato's Naples-based Southern command to a European officer. The Americans, who have always held the post, refuse on the ground that it comes with command of the Sixth Fleet, a big instrument of US power in the Mediterranean and Middle East.

M de Charette yesterday deplored the way that "the whole process [of Nato reform] seems to be grinding to a halt" over the public quarrel.



Protesters in Belgrade make the traditional three-finger Serb Orthodox gesture in demonstrations against the Milosevic administration

Alliance attacks Milosevic over annulled election

BY CHARLES BRENNER AND STACY SULLIVAN IN BELGRADE

THE Nato alliance yesterday condemned President Milosevic of Serbia for annulling the results of local elections which favoured the opposition and called on him to reverse the decision.

"We are dismayed that the Serbian authorities have ignored the calls of the international community to respect internationally recognised dem-

ocratic principles," Nato foreign ministers said. "We urge the Serbian Government to respect the democratic wishes of the people and reverse this decision."

The statement was reinforced by tough language from Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, who said: "The people of Serbia deserve what their neighbours to central Europe have: clean elections, a free press, a normal market economy." If President Milosevic "seeks to rule Serbia as an unreformed dictatorship,

it will only increase his isolation and the suffering of his people."

Hervé de Charette, the French Foreign Minister, added France's voice to the chorus, saying the alliance must make plain to Serbian leaders that they were breaching human rights by stifling opposition.

In Belgrade, however, the Yugoslav Federal Court announced that it would not reinstate the opposition victory in last month's elections. The ruling, which followed three weeks of demonstrations in Belgrade, ended

hopes of overturning the election outcome by strictly legal means.

However, leaders from Zajedno, the opposition coalition, vowed to keep up the pressure and organised a boycott of yesterday's parliamentary session, the first since last month's contested election.

While the Belgrade protests show no signs of letting up, their unprecedented momentum has not grown into a national movement. Demonstrators consist mainly of students and urban sympathisers of Zajedno.

Van Gogh dilemma for Paris

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE French Government was under intense pressure last night to buy an oil painting attributed to Vincent van Gogh, despite doubts about its authenticity.

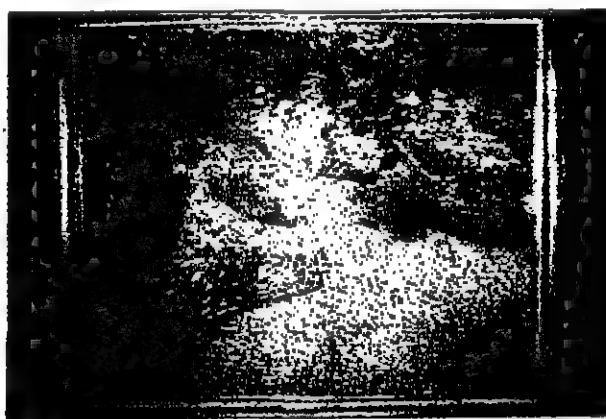
The state has already paid Fr145 million (£16.5 million) to keep *Jardin d'Auvers* in the country after a series of costly and humiliating lawsuits. The painting, once valued at £35

million and considered by many to be the last work painted by Van Gogh before he killed himself in 1890, was classified as a national treasure in 1989 and its owner was banned from selling it outside France. *Jardin d'Auvers* was sold in Paris three years later for Fr55 million, less than a sixth of its estimated sale price in London or New York.

The seller, Jacques Walter, subsequently sued the state, claiming he had been de-

prived of realising the painting's full value on the international market, and earlier this year he was awarded Fr145 million compensation.

As the painting went under the hammer again in Paris last night, experts estimated that with the export ban still in place it would fetch about Fr50 million. There have been claims that the painting may not be by Van Gogh but by one of his friends, Claude-Emile Shuffenecker.



Jardin d'Auvers: not to be sold outside France

Belgian held in lost girl case

BY CHARLES BRENNER

POLICE investigating the paedophile murders of Belgian children yesterday arrested a Brussels man on charges of involvement in the disappearance of a nine-year-old girl in 1992.

Jacques Gènevoix was taken into custody on the orders of prosecutors investigating the kidnapping of Loubna Benaissa, a Moroccan-born girl who went missing in the

Brussels district of Ixelles. Her disappearance has been widely linked to the activities of Marc Dutroux, the confessed paedophile kidnapper.

Mr Gènevoix was held soon after the disappearance but was released on providing an alibi, despite the discovery of blood and hair in his car. Investigators are now seeking to match samples taken at the time with blood from the Benaissa family. Belgian media have reported that wit-

nesses identified Mr Gènevoix as an inhabitant of the same haunts as Jean-Marc Nihoul, a Brussels businessman who has been charged with complicity in the Dutroux case.

Four girls' bodies were found last summer buried under houses owned by Mr Dutroux, but police have yet to find any trace of Loubna. Her disappearance is one of several, still unexplained, with which Mr Dutroux is suspected to have been connected.

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Iraqis celebrate end of embargo as Saddam opens oil lifeline to West



Saddam yesterday

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU
IN NICOSIA

A TRIUMPHANT President Saddam Hussein yesterday pressed a button that started Iraqi oil flowing to world markets for the first time since his forces invaded Kuwait six years ago. As his down-trodden people celebrated, the state-run media presented the event as a personal victory for the Iraqi leader and heralded it as the beginning of the end of the overall embargo.

The deal, first signed last May, enables Iraq to sell \$2 billion (£1.22 billion) oil over six months to buy food and medicine, under the strict

supervision of United Nations monitors deployed to ensure the proceeds are shared evenly among Iraq's 20 million people.

Iraqi officials have made it clear that Saddam, buoyed by the deal and his intervention in the Kurdish "safe area" last August which resulted in the collapse of a CIA-backed operation to topple him, will now try to woo Washington. If that strategy fails and he loses all hope of ending the wider sanctions, the unpredictable leader could lash out again. Barzan al-Takriti, his half-brother, has said:

"President Saddam Hussein does not walk down the same road twice, so if things get stuck no one

will be able to guess where he will come from and where the next strike will be." Mr al-Takriti told the London-based *al-Hayat* newspaper in a recent interview.

Privately, Iraqi officials say any hopes that Baghdad's charm offensive would work were dashed by President Clinton's decision to name Madeleine Albright, his hawkish UN Ambassador, as Secretary of State. She has made it clear she views Saddam as a dictator who must not be appeased.

Saddam's previously unannounced decision personally to start Iraqi oil flowing again from the northern oil city of Kirkuk through a pipeline to Turkey's

Mediterranean coast was trumpeted in an urgent telegram by the Iraqi News Agency. "President Saddam Hussein pressed the button in Kirkuk's Number One pumping station at 11.25 Baghdad time (08.25 GMT), declaring the return of Iraqi oil to the international market."

Soon afterwards, Turkey's state-owned refinery, Tüpraş, said it had signed a contract with Iraq to buy 75,000 barrels a day of the new exports. Iraqi officials said that oil from Iraq's southern terminal of Mina al-Bakr, on the Gulf, would start to flow on Friday or Saturday. UNICEF estimated in October that 4,500 children under the age of five

were dying each month from hunger and disease. When the deal was given the final go-ahead on Monday, the UN Security Council's president, Francesco Paolo Fulci of Italy, called it "the largest humanitarian operation ever launched by the United Nations". He added: "More than 20 million innocent Iraqi civilians will be finally saved from starvation and untold suffering."

It could be several weeks before the oil money arrives, but Iraqis have already been feeling the benefits of lower food prices and a stronger currency, which followed confirmation of the deal.

While Iraqis welcomed the UN

lifeline, many said it was not enough and called for an end to the embargo, which they insisted had failed in its undeclared aim of ousting Saddam. Washington has insisted that the oil-for-food deal is a purely humanitarian affair and that wider sanctions will remain until Iraq comes clean on its weapons programmes. American officials say this is most unlikely while Saddam remains in power.

□ Geneva: Victims of Iraq's 1991 invasion of Kuwait could start receiving the first instalments of \$5 billion in compensation as early as January now that Iraqi oil sales have resumed, a UN official said. (AP)

Mandela puts seal on new freedom at Sharpeville

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN SHARPEVILLE

PRESIDENT MANDELA of South Africa yesterday signed into law the post-apartheid Constitution at a moving ceremony in Sharpeville that drew a symbolic line under the country's troubled past.

Standing in the township's football stadium, Mr Mandela called on the crowd and millions watching the ceremony on television to join hands "for peace and prosperity" and out of respect for those who died to bring about the freedoms enshrined in the new Constitution. He said to cheers: "Today we humbly pay tribute to them in a special way. This is a monument to their heroism."

It was a ceremony rich with symbolism, from the army helicopters bearing the new South African flag to the location itself. On a dusty street near the stadium in 1960, police shot dead 69 people during a peaceful protest that engraved Sharpeville on the international conscience. In nearby Vereeniging, south of Johannesburg, a treaty signed between the Boers and the British in 1902 disenfranchised the blacks.

Flanked by representatives from the former ruling National Party and other political parties, Cyril Ramaphosa, the chief constitutional negotiator, said Vereeniging and Sharpeville were "powerful symbols"

of oppression. He hailed the new Constitution as a "break with the past". Referring to the arrival of the first European settlers in the 17th century, he added: "It is the end of 344 years of struggle for national unity and lasting peace."

The signing of the Constitution formally completed a process begun during talks to end apartheid. The document was written over two years in the Constitutional Assembly, comprising both Houses of Parliament, and was certified by the Constitutional Court last week. Its Bill of Rights and provisions for a host of human rights bodies guarantees to protect the population from abuses.

More than two million South Africans made submis-

sions to the Constitutional Assembly in a massive exercise of participatory democracy and many at the ceremony yesterday expressed their delight.

"We have crossed the Rubicon," said Jabu Kuzwayo, echoing a phrase used by P.W. Botha, the former President, over "reforms" of apartheid. "Our rights as black people are at last protected and it's a wonderful feeling." A man wearing a cap reading "A man wearing a cap reading 'I am so happy words cannot express it'."

Rosel Meyer, the National Party Secretary-General, said: "We are excited that we have come to the point when we can turn our backs on the injustices of the past."

The Constitutional Court accepted the final draft last week after forcing negotiators in September to look again at certain sections. It had rejected the proposed blueprint for permanent democracy because it found fault with the reduction of provincial powers, the failure to entrench fundamental rights and lack of protection for human rights watchdogs. The amendments made by negotiators and accepted by the court provide the provinces with a greater say in making legislation and further guarantees for the independence of watchdogs.

Tutu frees policeman

Cape Town: One of apartheid's most notorious killer policemen was pardoned yesterday in a decision likely to test the limits of national reconciliation. Brian Mitchell, serving 30 years for murdering 11 people in 1988, was freed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. (Reuters)



President Mandela and Cyril Ramaphosa at the ceremony in Sharpeville yesterday

Fourteen arrested after Paris blast

Paris: French police arrested 14 people in raids on suspected Muslim fundamentalist enclaves around Paris yesterday, a week after a bomb on a commuter train killed four passengers and injured dozens of others (Ben Macintyre writes). The sweep, ordered by magistrates investigating last week's explosion, was carried out in immigrant areas of central Paris and the suburbs.

The train bombing on December 3 bore all the hallmarks of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the group held responsible for last year's wave of attacks and the most violent of the extremist organisations. The group is seeking to overthrow the French-backed Algerian Government. Roland Jacquard, head of France's international terrorism group, said the police operation was aimed at tracking down Ali Touchent, alias "Tarek", who is believed to have co-ordinated last year's bombing campaign.

Civil servants to strike

Madrid: Spanish civil servants go on a one-day strike today in protest against the Government's decision to freeze public-sector wages (Tunku Varadarajan writes). Although the strike call has so far evoked little sympathy, with civil servants commonly viewed as overpaid, the action is the first big union challenge for José María Aznar, the Prime Minister, since he took office in May. The decision to freeze the wages was taken as part of the Government's effort to cut public spending and the budget deficit to ensure Spain's entry to the first tier of economic and monetary union.

Record toll of air deaths

Washington: With three weeks to go to the end of the year, more passengers have died in air crashes around the world than in any previous year (Bronwen Maddox writes). Record numbers of flights have pushed up the total although air travel is on average becoming safer. The new figures, from Airclaims of London, show that 1,187 passengers have been killed on commercial flights this year. That excludes deaths from terrorism and on aircraft in the former Soviet Union.

Rawlings claims win

Accra: President Rawlings, who has ruled Ghana for 15 years, has claimed a personal re-election victory in the country's polls and promised to work with the formidable Opposition, which has gained seats in parliament at the Government's expense. The President has 55 per cent of the 80 per cent of votes already counted. John Kufuor, his main opponent, has so far taken 42 per cent. (AP)

Pope will not say Mass

Rome: The Pope, apparently heeding medical advice, will not celebrate Christmas Mass in St Peter's this year, the Vatican said. The fact that he will miss one of the key celebrations of the Christian year underscores the fact that old age is taking its toll. He will, however, deliver his usual "Urbi et Orbi" blessing on Christmas Day. (Reuters)

Du Pont to stand trial

New York: A court said John du Pont, the eccentric multimillionaire, right, who claims to be the Dalai Lama and the last descendant of the Russian Imperial family, is sane enough to stand trial on a charge of killing his wrestling coach. Mr du Pont, 38, said he was mentally unstable after a siege at his Philadelphia house in January. The standoff came after the death of Dave Schultz, an Olympic wrestler who lived on his estate.



Lorry crash kills 70

Sigiriyama: A lorry carrying boulders ran off the road and overturned in a pond, killing at least 70 Hindu pilgrims who were riding on top in this village, 22 miles from Patna, in Bihar state. Many of the dead were women and children. The boulders fell onto the passengers, who had been celebrating the lorry's purchase by going on a pilgrimage. (Reuters)

Bethlehem 'is broke'

Bethlehem: The biblical birthplace of Jesus is broke and may not be able to celebrate Christmas properly, the Mayor, Elias Freij, said. Yasser Arafat gave \$40,000 (£24,400) for the celebrations, which need \$70,000, the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, a Palestinian body, said. (AP)

Bolger survives as maverick ignores his voters' wishes

FROM PATRICK SMELLIE IN WELLINGTON

IF supporters of New Zealand's experiment with proportional representation expected to produce more accountable politics, they will be sorely disappointed by the coalition Government which emerged yesterday.

By extending the life of the six-year-old National Party Government, the New Zealand First party of Winston Peters has in effect betrayed its supporters.

The deal leaves Jim Bolger as Prime Minister with control of 61 of the 126 seats in New Zealand's parliament and informal support from another eight MPs.

Mr Peters built his career on attacking the National Party, abandoning it in 1993 over his opposition to economic policies which have delivered the country low inflation, huge budget surpluses, and growth averaging more than 4 per cent a year.

Now the maverick has embraced the Nationalists and, as the coalition's new Treasurer, those policies as well. He acknowledged as much yesterday. "New Zealand First has long believed that New Zealanders have had enough of radical change — be it to the right or to the left — and want to plan their futures with a degree of certainty and stability," he said.

New Zealand's recent economic gains are probably intact. The test for both the new, less decisive political environment and for Mr Peters will be whether it is possible to build on those gains. The Nationalists won 44 seats in the election, the first under a proportional representation system which produced an unprecedented eight-week political hiatus while New Zealand First conducted coalition talks with both the Nationalists and the Labour Party.

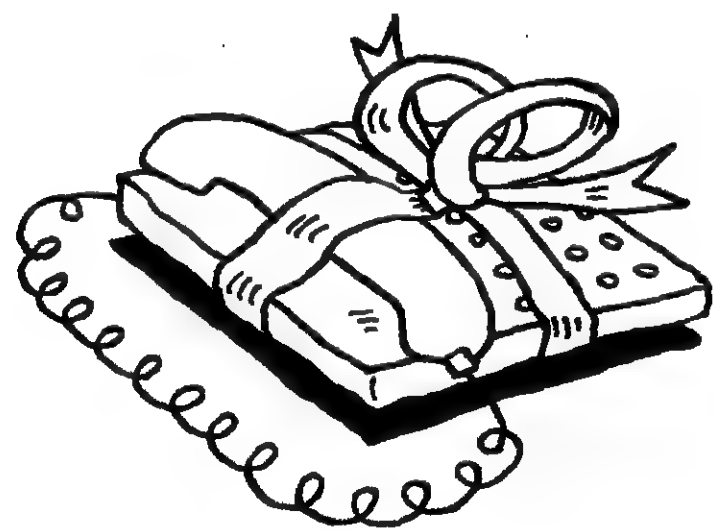
Yesterday's decision ignores the wishes of New Zealand First supporters, two thirds of whom told pollsters they wanted a coalition with Labour.

"There will be supporters who will be very disappointed by our decision today," Mr Peters acknowledged. "This has been the most difficult and complex decision that I have ever been involved in."

NBC has agreed an undisclosed settlement with Richard Jewell, once the FBI's chief suspect, who threatened to sue over the network's television coverage.

FBI reward for bomber
New York: The FBI has offered a \$500,000 (£300,000) reward for information leading to the person who planted the bomb that went off during the Atlanta Olympics (Quentin Letts writes). It has also released a tape-recording of a man telephoning a warning.

The bomb exploded in Atlanta's Centennial Park on July 27, killing two people and injuring many more. The FBI also urged Olympic spectators to check their videotapes in case they had pictures of the bomber.



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Howard distances Britain from EU police integration

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

BRITAIN distanced itself yesterday from the newly launched scheme of Helmut Kohl and Jacques Chirac for fast-track European integration in police matters. Announcing the British ratification of the Europol convention, Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, made plain that he would resist any attempt to turn the Hague-based unit into a kind of European FBI.

Europol, he said in Bonn after talks with Manfred Kanther, the Interior Minister, would "collect and analyse information from member states and use the information to help the law enforcement agency of those states". By contrast, Herr Kohl, the German Chancellor, said at the Franco-German summit on Monday that he wanted to move quickly towards establishing Europol as "an effective police authority with operational powers". Mr Howard, without directly challenging Herr Kohl, set out Britain's view of Europol limits: "There should be no power to investigate or arrest people in other member states."

The French and German leaders indicated that they want to extend the principle of

"flexibility" — allowing fast integrators to steam ahead without those unwilling or unable to keep up — from foreign policy to home and police affairs. Mr Howard, courtously but firmly, rejected that idea and concentrated on the need for common policing policies rather than for European federal institutions. In particular, Mr Howard said that he wanted to abolish three European steering groups on immigration, policing and judicial affairs which he regarded as nothing more than "an added layer of bureaucracy in Brussels". Co-operation on issues from immigration and asylum to criminal sentencing should be carried out at an inter-governmental level rather than through Brussels or as part of an integrated European policy.

The contrast with the French and German leaders could not have been more stark. In Monday's open letter to the Irish presidency, Herr Kohl and President Chirac said "the European Union treaty's provisions for co-operation in justice and home affairs are not sufficient" to combat international crime.

Mr Howard, though, said that he agreed with Herr

Kanther that improvement was "possible on the basis of existing treaties". The cloudy phrasing of the Franco-German letter in which French and German positions were glued to each other, rather than meshed into a coherent initiative, means that Britain need not start an open conflict with the Paris-Bonn axis. There is room even for relatively sceptical members of the European Union to read positive, or at least uncontroversial, thoughts into the text.

That allowed Mr Howard to say yesterday that he was in broad agreement with his German counterpart in so far as "we are practical men seeking practical solutions to practical problems". The unspoken implication was that the Kohl-Chirac initiative, while addressing a few of the practical problems such as terrorism, drug dealing and cross-border crime, was not heavy with practical solutions.



Mira Nair has asked critics to leave the film alone until the appeals procedure is over

Indian film of Kama Sutra alarms censors

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

A SEX-PACKED film about love, *Kama Sutra*, is being studied by India's highest film censorship tribunal after lower-level censors savaged scenes of nudity and explicit love-making. The land of the world's most famous sex book is not ready to see the volume acted out on screen.

No film like it has been made before in India and its release uncut would shake the foundations of "Bollywood", the Bombay-based Hindi film industry. It is directed by Mira Nair, the director who made *Mississippi Masala* and *Salaam Bombay!*

The actresses include Rekha, who alone would draw half of India to see her in such a film. Critics have responded to an appeal by Ms Nair not to review the film or give it widespread publicity until the appeals process is complete.

Those who have seen it at a private showing are divided. "Pornographic from beginning to end," one said. Sunil Sethi, a commentator and columnist, disagreed. "It is

sexually explicit, but it would be silly to expect anything to do with the *Kama Sutra* not to be. It is not distasteful or vulgar, although there is not much of a story and the dialogue is exasperating."

The appeals tribunal is due to rule soon. Ms Nair has shown the film abroad, perhaps in the hope that it would receive the sort of acclaim given to *Baran* Queen, which was censored so heavily in India that its director disowned it. But it has not had a big impact for all its groundbreaking venture into Indian sexuality.

Kama Sutra stands little chance of being shown in its entirety in India, despite the esteem in which Ms Nair is held. "It is rather like those stylised Japanese films that are very explicit but which you could not call pornographic," Mr Sethi said. "It has bare breasts and side views of naked women that show everything. The love-making is graphic, but not in an ugly way. I saw nothing objectionable in it."

Women taking bulls by the horns

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN MADRID

SPAIN'S premier bullfighting school has been flooded with applications from women this year in what some observers are calling "the Cristina Sánchez phenomenon".

Inspired by Señora Sánchez, who in May became the first female matador, hundreds of women have sought entry to Madrid's Escuela de Tauromaquia.

The school is Señora Sánchez's alma mater, and standards are exacting. Only 12 women were admitted this week in an intake of nearly 200. But that is still a six-fold increase over last year. "There will be more next year, many more," a trainer said yesterday. "These girls are here to stay and the men are getting used to them. And so are the bulls."

Nicolas Barrón, the school's director, says that women



Sánchez inspiration to hundreds of women

have "exactly the same ability as men and exactly the same potential to be great bullfighters". He said: "Cristina has been a very positive influence. She has all the attributes of a first-class bullfighter — courage, poise, technique, art."

But Joaquín Vidal, the country's leading bullfighting critic, has often commented on Señora Sánchez's lack of strength, demonstrated last season by her inability to finish off a bull cleanly at the end of a technically accomplished *toro* (fight).

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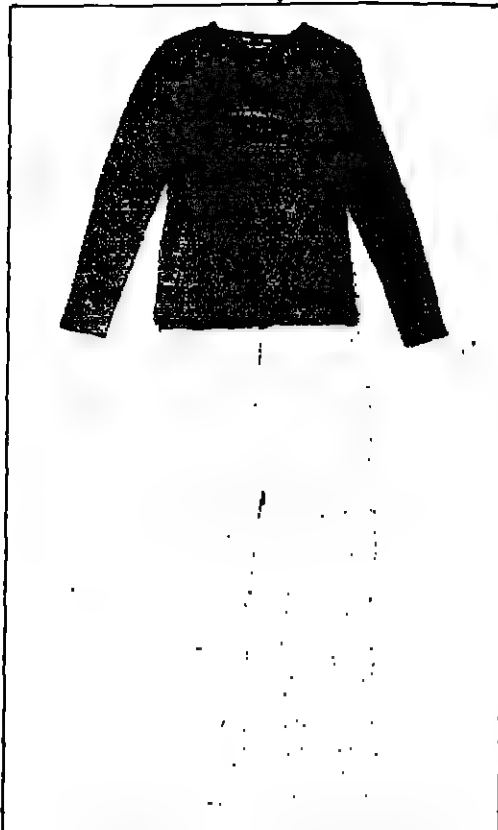
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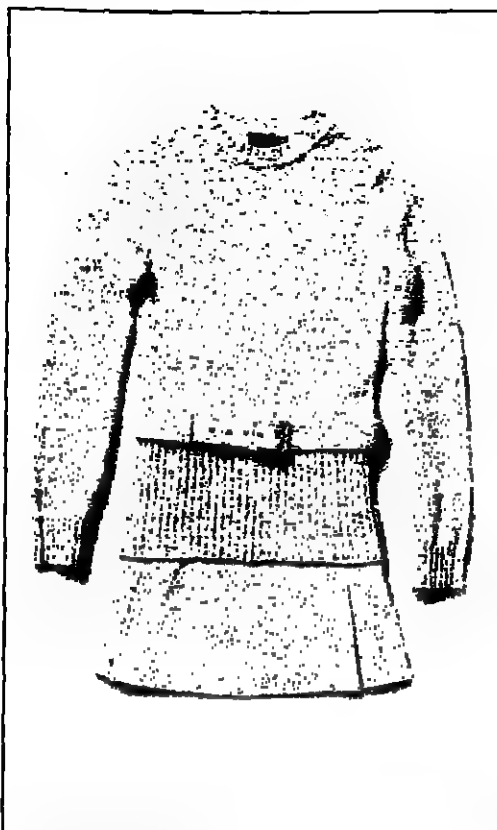
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Students discover a degree of flair



Karen Ross-Smith chose a pair of beige stretch boot-cut jeans, £49.99, and a cobalt long-sleeved T-shirt, £19.99, both by French Connection



Tamera Barnett chose a stone mini-skirt, £34, and an orange belted jumper, £48, both by Jigsaw, 128-127 New Bond Street, London W1



Claire Coleman chose black stretch trousers, £50, and a white stretch poplin shirt, £50, both by French Connection, 99 Long Acre, London WC2

It is 11 on a foggy morning outside King's College, Cambridge, and students are cycling past in a drab collection of tracksuits, fading jeans, zip-up fleece jackets and waxed jackets.

What on earth is going on? I was here from 1987 to 1990 and spent a good deal of time malingering on this same wall, and, to be frank, students were wearing the same thing then. I feel like a character from *Groundhog Day*. Time just hasn't moved on.

And we had an excuse. It was the late Eighties, and student fashion was either of the right-on, all black, second-hand kind, or it was aspirational. Sometimes it was a bit of both (I was in awe of a friend who owned a Body Map dress, bought for her by her mother). Many students were obsessed with black-tie events, donning the full kit even though the alcohol was

Style Editor Grace Bradberry returns to her alma mater to see how Cambridge students dress now and to ask them how they would spend £100

served up in a plastic bucket. Many student wardrobes had split personalities: fading "indie" T-shirts hung next to blue blazers and chinos, Laura Ashley ballgowns with big bows next to shapeless grey leggings. If dress is an indicator of character, as some claim, then we were a mixed-up bunch. On only a few points is my conscience clear — I never owned a waxed jacket, I never wore outside rugby shirts to curry favour with the men, and I never, ever, tucked jeans into black boots.

The ethnic craze was also in full swing, though a cursory glance around the marketplace revealed that that hasn't changed. We weren't as label obsessed as other sub-sections

of society at the time — but among the many things I learnt as an undergraduate was that Joseph was a highly desirable designer shop.

But the one thing that really defined Cambridge fashion, then as now, was the weather. Even science students, who should know better, believe it is the coldest place on earth. Ice forms in the inside of windows, freezing fog hangs permanently over the river. Like Sir Ranulph Fiennes, undergraduates take a survivalist attitude to clothes, which explains why even the most fashion-conscious haven't gone for this season's lean, mean silhouette.

Take Claire Coleman, a 19-year-old linguist at Queens' College. By late November,

she was wearing five tops. "People warned me about the weather here, but I wouldn't listen. It's actually colder here than the ski resort where I worked in my year off."

The top layer is a multi-coloured South American jacket bought in a shop in Guildford for £60. "But you can get them on the market here." Underneath, that, there's a Gap sweatshirt, a rugby shirt, and an ageing fleece. Finally, there's a T-shirt from a Paul Weller concert buried at the bottom. So the top half alone adds up to more than £100, even before you get down to Claire's second-hand Levi's and Miss Selfridge trainers. She'd like to wear clubby clothes but fears hypothermia.

It's not just the cold that cramps people's style. Cambridge remains the spiritual home of young fogies. In my time, there was a bizarre character who spent his free time parading round Trinity Great Court in tweed breeches and a hunting jacket. He also rode a tricycle. Other students wore cravats.

On the evidence of a day spent in the city, things have improved. But not that much. "Cambridge is quite traditional," says Jess Boyde, 21, a social anthropology student at Downing College. "My clothes have become a bit more theatrical since I arrived, but that's all you can say. And I don't go to many black-tie events — they're usually linked to sports and drinking clubs."

Jess is heavily into fur this season, as are most of the designers. But her look came cut-price — the grey fur hat cost a mere £12 in Accessorize, while the coat was £15 from a market stall. She bought the white shirt from Miss Selfridge five years ago, and the pinstripe turn-ups came from Oxford for £8. The shoes are the most expensive item — they cost £30 from Office.

But lack of funds has not stopped some students from acquiring a frighteningly advanced fashion philosophy. "It's not worth buying catwalk cast-offs from high street stores. If you want designer stuff, then you should buy the original, because ironically it's the designer things which last," says Tamera Barnett, 19, an English student at King's. "I go to places like Jigsaw to get staples that will go with lots of things and will wear well." Her combat pants (£30), and fake fur jacket (£80) come from Boxfresh in Covent Garden; the trainers from



Jess Boyde: "My clothes have become a bit more theatrical, but that's all you can say"

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Karen Ross-Smith: trainers

Sneaker Stadium in New York.

The more fashion-conscious students pick up on a mix of catwalk trends and street style. "You have to go to London to see what's happening," says Karen Ross-Smith, a 20-year-old social psychology student. "I bought these trainers for £60 in Office. I've also bought a pair of lime green and brown boogie trousers from Oasis, for £30."

The last word goes to Petra Jones, a 20-year-old Newnham student, who apologises for the extravagance of her black velvet coat from Monsoon (£100 in a sale). "I'd never heard of all the designer names until I came to Cambridge," she says.

Photographs by
MICHAEL POWELL

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Parting of the ways: Diana, Princess of Wales, with her not-so-new style and Rod Stewart, who, after 20 years of spiky locks, has changed his look.

Immortal hair

Never has so much fuss been made of a wonky parting. Diana, Princess of Wales, has unveiled a new hairstyle, the principal feature of which is a zigzag parting. Immediately, the great and the good of the crimping world have stepped forward to praise her for being on the cutting edge of coiffery. But look closely. How different is the Princess's "new" look from all her others she has modelled over the years? A certain *au courant* sleekness and that curious parting aside, it is barely altered. In truth, it is just the most recent in a long line of "new" royal hairstyles that never were.

In adopting this, her latest, not-so-new hairstyle, the Princess has confirmed her hallowed place in the Immortal Hair Hall of Fame. Holders of this glittering honour have a style so personal it transcends cutish notions of "in" or "out". Not that it is easy to remain aloof from the ebb and flow of contemporary style. It requires guts, determination, a hairdresser you trust and a sharp eye kept on the *maroc*. A certain strength of character and stidiness of opinion come in jolly handy.

There can be few more wittingly dismissive of any

To enter the Hair Hall of Fame, you need a style so personal it transcends fashion, says Lowri Turner

hint of trendiness than Baroness Thatcher. From the moment she stepped inside No 10, her hairstyle became immovable. Some credit for this must go to her personal hairdresser, a certain Paul Alan, who explained in 1989: "A firm set is essential, as she might be driving a tank later in the day."

Out of office, some might have expected a degree of loosening up. But that is to misunderstand the nature of the Immortal Hair wearer. They are making a psychological rather than a fashion statement. In Lady Thatcher's case, she is proclaiming her steadfastness by virtue of a large dose of Elmet. In common with the Queen, who has had the same perm since 1972, and the Princess Royal (the eternal beehive), Lady Thatcher has created herself into the crimping world's Rock of Gibraltar. The same could be said of Barbara Cartland. Her choux-pastry-puff coil is a confection so remarkable that several of her poodles could quite comfortably shelter within it during inclement weather.



Lost locks: Farrah Fawcett

Apart from a love of back-combing, what all these women share is fame. And, indeed, were they not quite so well-known, their timewarp tresses might get them some strange looks at the checkout at Tesco. The line between being an icon of unchanging style and looking as if you are living in another decade is a fine one.

In truth, there are two types of Immortal Hair wearer. Those who actively seek inclu-

sion in the hair Hall of Fame and those who have it thrust upon them. Twiggy's Vidal Sassoon wedge-cut sums up the geometric mid-Sixties. She wore it for only a short time, yet we will forever associate her with it. Farrah Fawcett is just as imprisoned by her Charlie's Angels flicks, despite having peeled them back almost 20 years ago. Will Jennifer Aniston, the *Friends* actress whose lift and flip hairdo has taken the world's salons by storm, feel a similar need to destroy her own creation?

One who has taken the plunge is Rod Stewart. Part rock god, part cockatoo, after 20 years of spiky locks, Stewart now has a close crop. His young wife, the model Rachel Hunter, is said to have loathed the old look. And as Kieran Tomes, from *GQ*, says: "The woman often has quite a lot to do with it when a bloke changes his hair."

"Men get stuck because they think they look attractive, or because it makes them feel young," explains Newby Hands, the hair and beauty director of *Harpers & Queen*.

The hairdresser Trevor Sorbie is blunter still. "Men tend to cling to the style of their youth because that was when they probably had the most pulling power," he says. Mick Jagger, Brian May, of Queen, Status Quo's Francis Rossi and the nightclub owner Peter Stringfellow all come to mind.

"Very few fashionable hairstyles are flattering," warns Newby Hands. The supermodel Helena Christensen's new pudding-bowl style is proof of that. Instead, the celebrity snapper Nicky Clark advises "evolution". Clark recently cut his own trademark long curls. "There comes a point when you have to move on," he explains.

This is a sentiment with which Julie Goodyear, a former landlady of the Rovers Return in *Coronation Street*, might concur. There was a point, a few years back, when her on-screen beehive almost deserved separate billing in the *Radio Times*.

Then scriptwriters had a brainwave — a fire at the Rovers. Nothing less than a full-scale inferno could have excused the sight of Beate in her nightie, without her beehive. It was never to reappear, except in the memory of viewers of course, where it remains, well, immortal.

The truth under that healthy skin

Beneath all its crackpot philosophising about the joys of playing badminton in the buff, *Health & Efficiency* was really a prototype for porn mags

I once told a friend that a magazine called *Homes and Ideas* had asked to photograph my kitchen. "Great idea," he said, "a magazine devoted to real estate and philosophy." On that basis, *Health & Efficiency* should have been the magazine of the age after all, the whole of society now seems convulsed with either a pseudo-medical, morally preening narcissism or scorched-earth economising.

Thus the title could have got everyone in. In fact, the magazine, relaunched in the Eighties as *H&E*, was never about health or efficiency: it parveyed, rather, what the Americans, still in initials-mode, call T & A.

Health & Efficiency was, from its very inception, about titillation. It was about what you could get away with. In Edwardian England it was considered frightfully naughty to show a lady with no clothes on, even if she was airbrushed into sanitised smoothness. (And that, after all, had an artistically respectable precedent: didn't John Ruskin run shocked from his wedding bed, having been taught, pictorially, to believe that women had no public hair?) These days, it takes rather more to shock us: even the magazine, revamped and vulgarised, couldn't deliver the goods. So it folded.

Of course, it is possible to cast the story rather differently. Here goes: *Health & Efficiency* tells of a more innocent age, when harmless fun could be had by watching fleshy matrons cavort naked on sunny English lawns. But this was before nude models adopted explicit rather than Grecian poses. Now, when every newsagent's top shelf groans with no-holds-barred porn magazines, there is no room for a little simple amusement in the form of *H&E*.

That might convince some people, but it doesn't convince me. I know that the magazine — or so it claimed — strove to educate, never titillate. I understand that its purpose ostensibly was to promote the ends of naturism, a dotty, if not spurious movement, devoted to spending as much time as possible without any clothes on, in the belief that the ills of society could be redressed if the fig leaf Adam and Eve adopted in shame were ripped off with pride. But underneath all the crackpot philosophising, *Health & Efficiency* was never anything but *Fiesta* in embryonic form.

I am willing to believe that wasn't the aim of either

its creators or contributors. I am perfectly willing to believe that any number of people feel that nakedness makes its own politico-cultural point. But that point can only make sense in a society where it is considered the norm to be clothed. We still live in that society, but these days we take rather a different view of nakedness.

When *Health & Efficiency* started, there was something shameful about nudity. And that carried on (and still does for some); my maternal grandmother, who for some reason was educated in part at a convent, told me of having (like the Antonia White character in *Frost in May*) to take baths while wearing a cover-all

as to describe the magazine itself as the culprit, but it is part of the pornography industry. You couldn't have what exists now without there having been that then.

I don't use that to condemn the magazine. There is little point taking the sadder-but-wiser new-liberal stance on this. You know the line: we thought it was all innocent then, we believed in freedom and lack of inhibition, but it's led us to perdition or as near as dammit. Of all the ills of society, nakedness is most certainly the least. The only strange thing is that for all our modern openness about the body, its functions and appurtenances, we continue to snigger about it. I suppose that shows how little influence pornography has actually had.

Still, we wouldn't be human if we weren't just a little hypocritical. Seeing the cover of last week's *Time Out*, which promised "Weird Sex ... our sensational survey and photo gallery reveal all", one can see why people get sentimental about a time when *Health & Efficiency* ran pictures of stout people letting it all hang out while playing badminton as if they had never noticed they weren't wearing any clothes.



Nigella Lawson

shift. But even if modesty remains in the majority, the cultural climate has thawed. Not everyone may agree it to be a Good Thing, but when daily papers carry pictures of topless women (more invidiously influential, if one takes a dim view of increasing acreages of flesh on show, than whatever goes on between the covers of the porn mags), then there is bound to be less interest in a magazine which tries to make us come over all sniggering about stark nakedness in the first place. And yes, I know naturism is meant to be about not sniggering about bosoms and bottoms but we all know, too, that that was what was always done.

The truth is, we find such images funny now. But if we didn't see that they were intended to be naughty, we wouldn't laugh. And that is crucial. In other words, it is not quite the case that, as one rueful commentator has put it, that "sadly *Health & Efficiency* has fallen victim to today's salacious moral climate". Perhaps I wouldn't go so far

Seeing the pictures of the World's First Surrogate Grandmother, as she has been somewhat misleadingly tagged, propping herself up in bed, bespectacled, exhausted, happy having given over the child she bore for her daughter, I couldn't see what all the fuss was about. They seemed to me to be immeasurably moving.

I'm not convinced, either, that baby Caitlin is doomed, as certain medical commentators predict, to suffer an intense identity crisis later on. I certainly don't see that it would be any more pronounced than for any adopted child, or one carried by a surrogate mother: in fact considerably less. It is not confusing for a child to feel intimately connected to its grandmother; indeed it is normal.

Besides, when illegitimacy was held to be a shame that no child was thought to deserve bearing, children would often find out years later that the woman they thought was their mother was, all along, their grandmother. I don't say it must have been easy, though the children in question always claim it made them feel doubly loved.

In Caitlin's case, it will simply be the other way around.

What men really want for Christmas

IN COMMON with proper-size Kleenex, this Christmas gift guide is for men — and women will be eternally grateful. It is a guide to attitude get into the right frame of mind, study the examples, and you will understand what men really want.

First lesson: never buy anything described as "perfect for the man in your life" or anything in a "Men's Gift"

Paying over £250 for Car Insurance?

Call 0800 00 41 21 service line

Don't waste your money on 'indispensable' tools or trinkets from a time-warped. Buy him the best, says Joseph Connolly, and he will love you forever

section. They will be straight out of a Fifties time warp when men apparently appreciated giant tubs of Brylcreem, charcoal leathers, hip flasks and Black & Decker. If your man wants to spend Christmas gluing down his hair, washing the car, drinking alone or sanding down the floor, save yourself the trouble and dump him.

Don't buy anything that looks like something else: no right-minded man will be pleased if the magnum of bordeaux he unwraps turns out to be a pepper mill. And avoid anything with Santa on it. Also out is anything self-consciously got up as a gift. A sweet little tin antacid case

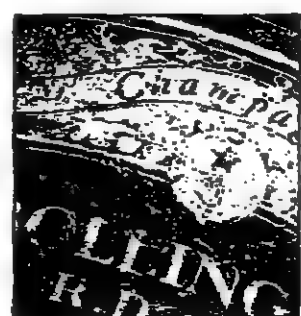
containing four quarter-bottles of champagne is a real pain in the neck. When do you open the piddly things? And what do you do with the tin? Most fancy tins and boxes are out — except the wooden case around a dozen claret, or the label-covered wooden box around 25 Monte Cristos.

Practical things are a no-no so tell the retailer just what he can do with his socket set, and steer clear of anything billed as "the ultimate", or that threatens to "organise" a man or be his "male".

So, what to do? I'll tell you what to do — get yourself down to Jermyn Street — it's a man's street, perhaps the only one in the world. It is cho-

biotic with what men really want, and so are a clutch of shops comfortably near by. Also there are decent places to eat and drink — such as the Oak Room in the Meridien Hotel, Piccadilly, which offers gift vouchers for its seven-course Menu Gourmand: buy two at £46 apiece, and he will thank you, because good food and drink (along with your company) are one of the things men really want.

In Hilditch & Key, you will find the best shirts in the world: he will know the shirt is the best and will love you and thank you for it. Buy a tie, but not an "amusing" one: clowns and pink elephants were sort of fun for a short



Bollinger, beluga and you

time (it was a Tuesday). John Lobb has the best ready-made shoes in the world — price (£300-£400) but he will thank you for 15 years as they go on looking better and better.

What about a truckle of stilton from Paxton & Whitfield? A great big mouldy cylinder of the best in the world, with maybe a ladle to gouge it. Getting the idea? In

Florida, a large wooden tub of shaving cream and a badger brush is cool. At Dunhill you go for a lighter (the best), Havanas, a Montblanc Meisterstück pen or one of their excellent watches. With a fine watch, he will thank you every minute, for the rest of his life. Go to Quaxino's round the corner and have a glass of champagne: you've earned it. Do not buy the metal "Q" ashtray because he doesn't want it. Hatchard's for lots of glossy books but avoid the book that's just "perfect" for him, because he's already bought it. hasn't he? And what for the man who has absolutely everything? More. Beluga and Bollinger (Fortums) are always acceptable, and form a delightful accompaniment to your own good and lovely self, because women, of course, are always high on the list of what men really want.

Real

37 Burlington Arcade, 192 Piccadilly, W1 Tel 0171 493 9220



If your boss has given you Christmas day off...

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CASTELLBLANCH - CONDE DE CARALT - FREIXENET - SEGURA VIUDAS



THE MINISTRY SYNDROME

Pesticide, paperwork and prevarication

More than six years after 50,000 British troops were sent to evict Saddam Hussein from Kuwait, and more than two years since questions were first asked in the House of Commons, Nicholas Soames, Armed Forces Minister, has confirmed that Parliament was seriously misled about the use of pesticides in Saudi Arabia. For most of this period, the suggestion that so-called Gulf War syndrome might have been triggered by the excessive use of organophosphate chemicals was dismissed because official records showed minimal quantities of those substances had been sent with our soldiers. It now transpires that vast amounts of the material were acquired locally and deployed in abundance. Although any link between this discovery and the syndrome remains, for the moment, unproven, two matters are evident. First, that this practice was not conducive to the general good health of the Army. Secondly, that an appalling catalogue of blunders led ministers consistently to offer answers to their colleagues that were untrue. Neither is ever acceptable.

In his statement Mr Soames at least displayed all due humility. His pledge that the failures within the Ministry of Defence would be fully investigated, and that those civil servants responsible would be disciplined, is quite proper and must be met. Some external scrutiny is also needed for confidence to be restored. The House of Commons Select Committee on Defence, which has generally performed in a professional and bipartisan fashion, should feel no qualms in calling politicians, officials, and the military to task before it and demanding explanations.

That such materials were being liberally used seems to have been no secret to those serving in the desert. That it escaped their

superiors, because of "inadequate accounting procedures" and apparent "failures in communications" is little short of a disgrace. The ministers involved appear to have acted honourably enough, but the whole affair reflects badly on all concerned.

Mr Soames's further announcement that two epidemiological studies into the possible effect of these organophosphates will now take place is also overdue. It has been a year since the principle of such an inquiry was accepted. It has taken too long to decide upon the details of this research. The families of the 1,100 veterans who have experienced sickness since 1991, and who have often been treated brusquely by officialdom, are entitled to a fully funded and rigorous examination of this discovery. The minister's comments that he would continue to co-operate as closely as possible with the Pentagon on these questions is to be welcomed. Whether or not such concerns are justified, accusations that Gulf War syndrome has not been followed with proper attention are bound to increase in the light of what Mr Soames conceded yesterday. They cannot be permitted to persist. The Ministry of Defence has promised the most open approach possible. It must now deliver.

At this stage incompetence rather than conspiracy or cover-up looks the most likely explanation. That is not much compensation for those affected. Belated acknowledgement and apology is better than none at all but events can hardly be allowed to rest there. Whether there is a syndrome that can be traced directly to the Gulf conflict is obviously important but now only part of the issue. Parliament must fully satisfy itself that much wider irregularities have not been masked by the same procedures that prompted the Soames statement.

HEAD AND HEART

Meanwhile over the Channel...

Today the House of Commons holds its European debate. Tomorrow finance ministers make a new attempt to agree the single currency's "stability pact". This weekend comes the EU summit itself. Sounds and furies will fill the corridors. But step back for a moment. What does Britain's debate about monetary union and the future of Europe tell us about the real relations between this country and its neighbours?

At every point, it seems, the differences overwhelm the ties that bind. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, for example, is taken by both his friends and his enemies to be the Cabinet minister most sympathetic to the single currency. Yet he tells a parliamentary committee this week that a delay in starting monetary union is very probable and that there is a 40 per cent chance that it will not happen at all. Any senior German politician who speculated so openly on the chances of delay and failure would be taken for a fool determined to damage himself.

There has been debate across the Channel over monetary union. But it has been of a quite different character from the argument here. Helmut Kohl's moves towards the launch of the euro have been protected by the taboo in his country against open dissent. German opposition must be mounted in covert ways. Debate in and between France and Germany does not turn on the aim of the single currency but on the means to make it work.

The tension over the stability pact, which Herr Kohl and President Chirac failed to resolve in Nuremberg on Monday, is a power struggle to determine how authority will be exercised over the economies in the future euro zone. However difficult the row this week, the ultimate aim remains unquestioned. By concentrating on the minutiae of "excessive deficits" and a pact

designed to supplement the Maastricht treaty, French politicians can distract themselves from less agreeable questions. Stability pact or not, how much autonomy can the French State expect to preserve in a fully fledged economic, monetary and political union? No mainstream French politician has asked the question out loud in this form. The answer, of course, is precious little.

For politicians on the Continent this truth is an irrelevancy. They assume that the single currency is going to happen: the only unanswered questions concern the exact composition of the leading group. The aim of monetary union is political and not economic: it is to control Germany's power. Westminster debates the single currency and the Government defends the wait-and-see policy as if it were a purely economic matter. This habit of reasoning the rights and wrongs of European integration looks eccentric across the Channel, where "making Europe" is a totem of moral excellence and an affair of heart, not head.

Britons may observe the last-minute doubts inside the French political class and wonder if there may be a change of heart at the eleventh hour; but the odds are against. President Chirac may have been ambivalent about Europe in the past but he has inherited a commitment to the euro which he cannot abandon without, as France sees it, great loss of power and influence.

The gap between the political culture of the Continent and Britain's is vast and in the long run more significant than that which divides Westminster's politicians. Chancellor Kohl's passionate will to entrench European unification around his own country and France by means of the single currency was always going to be divisive: the outline of the division between Britain and its partners grows daily more visible.

WIRRAL WAITS

The Government should respect by-election conventions

Putting the curious position of Sir John Gort to one side, the Government will lose its majority once Barnsley East casts its ballots tomorrow night. It would become a minority administration were the electorate of Wirral South to reject the Conservatives when they replace the late Barry Porter.

If, however, those who inhabit the dark corners of the Whips' Office and Conservative Central Office get their way, no such opportunity will occur. Citing spurious precedent and obviously heartfelt concern about the time, expense and inconvenience of asking those voters to venture to the polls twice between now and May 22, 1997 — the last legal date when a general election may be called — the party managers apparently see no reason why a by-election should be held there at all.

The conventions that structure such matters are, admittedly, relatively recent. Only since a Speaker's Conference in 1973 has it been accepted that a contest should be initiated, by the Chief Whip of whichever party is defending a seat within three months of an existing Member's departure and that an election should follow very shortly afterwards. This guideline emerged in response to the frequent tardiness prevalent before then and the formula has been ignored on a handful of occasions out of the 120 or so instances since, usually for reasons of practicality such as the long summer recess intervening between a death and the opportunity to trigger the hustings. Were it to be respected this time, the

Government would have until February 3 next year to move the writ. Wirral South would then make its choice in early March.

Only those of breathtaking naivety can miss the motive at work here. While Wirral remains without a Member, assuming no further defections from its ranks, the Government will not technically reach minority standing and may retain its majority on all legislative committees. With luck, John Major should be able to soldier on until April or May. Good news for the Downing Street planners, but not for the residents of Wirral South, who could be deprived of proper representation for up to 200 days as a consequence.

That might have been acceptable in the last century, but not now. Members of Parliament point, correctly, to their bulging postbags and expanding casework. Three hundred such letters a week are now common. Over 8,000 inquiries might have to be dealt with on a holding basis. That does not constitute decent democratic practice.

The Government should abandon any plans it might have of avoiding the electorate. If it refuses to do so, the Opposition must have no qualms in offering the writ itself. If this extremely reasonable convention cannot be enforced by the House, then it should be placed on a statutory basis. Those who pay for Parliament are entitled to full constituency service. No taxation without representation is as worthy a principle for Wirral South residents as it was for Washington's revolutionaries.

Awearying of Kenneth Clarke

From Mr Howard Reynolds

Sir, One grows weary at the admiration shown for Kenneth Clarke (Andrew Reid's letter, December 9) and reading of his success as Chancellor (Riddell on Monday, same day).

A recession triggered in large part by the policies of Nigel Lawson, then deepened by an ERM commitment "negotiated" by, in my view, an epically incompetent successor (now Prime Minister), pitched the United Kingdom into a new economic Dark Age.

Thanks, finally, to the intervention of the markets, the economy began to recover. But recovery did not then and does not now have much to do with Her Majesty's Government, nor does the current display of elementary common sense — long overdue though it is in a Conservative Chancellor — mark out Mr Clarke as a fiscal giant of our times.

The unpalatable truth for this Government is that no matter how much it strives to rewrite recent history, nor how vigorously its supporters seek electoral rehabilitation through the adoption of an unremarkable Chancellor, the Conservative record of economic mismanagement is unlikely to be forgotten or forgiven. Though the general election may be fought some time between now and May 1997, the Conservatives actually lost as long ago as Wednesday, September 16, 1992.

Yours sincerely,
HOWARD M. REYNOLDS,
140 Grosvenor, Wetherall, Cumbria.

From Mr Simon Palmer

Sir, Mr Andrew Reid tells us what a successful Chancellor of the Exchequer we have and it is thanks to him we have such a strong economy. Filled.

Our economy is stronger than of yore because of continuing high unemployment, lack of confidence in a bumpy marketplace and a workforce, in fear of losing their jobs, prepared to work harder for less money.

Negative equity has not gone away: inflation is due to rise shortly after the general election when the real facts will emerge and a presumably Labour government will be left to pick up the pieces.

Yours etc,
S. PALMER,
5 Courtyard, Cooleshurst Road, NS,
December 9.

Christian millennium

From Mr Michael Smith

Sir, After pressure from the Prince of Wales and Archbishop of Canterbury, Virginia Bostonley has promised that the millennium should be an essentially Christian event (report, December 2).

Two aspects need to be considered: the form and the content. The first could include pilgrimages by church congregations to holy places such as Canterbury, York, Walsingham, Lindisfarne, Iona, Assisi and the Holy Land, as well as the mass pealing of church bells.

Equally important is the substance. This should surely include expressions of gratitude for the contribution that Christian virtues have made to global development, as well as a commitment by individuals to renew the spiritual dimension in their lives in an age of increasing secularisation. But it might also include a note of repentance for past wrongs committed by Christians, from the Crusades onwards, who have failed to live by their creed and morality.

The next centuries will see an increasing dialogue between the world's great faiths and their spheres of influence, but we are still a long way from a basis of trust. If the "Christian party to which everyone is welcome", as Dr Carey calls the millennium celebrations, could also help renew the trust between, for instance, Western culture and Islam, then we would really have something to celebrate.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL SMITH,
46 Stanton Road, Wimbledon, SW20,
December 4.

Brunei auction

From the President of the Newcomen Society

Sir, Whilst we are fortunate that some of Brunei's papers are already in safe keeping at Bristol University Library, it is a matter of extreme regret that the latest rich archive, lost to view for so many years, has not also been placed in the public domain (letter, December 7).

The engineering profession has made a major contribution to the development of Britain's wealth and power. Only through archives such as this one can we fully understand and assess that contribution. How can we ensure that the papers of other engineers can be kept together for the benefit of future historians, if those of one as renowned as I. K. Brunel can be disposed of piecemeal?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL R. BAILEY, President,
The Newcomen Society for the Study of the History of Engineering and Technology,
The Science Museum, SW7,
December 4.

Business letters, page 27

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Global responsibilities in fighting the spread of Aids

From Professor Michael Adler

Sir, Neither your feature of December 2, "The city that is dying of Aids", nor your leading article of the same day, "Day of Aids", highlights what I regard as the fundamental global issue — the fact that 95 per cent of the estimated 30 million people who will be infected with HIV by the end of the decade, with two million dying a year, live in developing countries.

It is therefore alarming that the Overseas Development Administration's budget continues to fall in real terms. In 1996-97 the cut was 5.4 per cent (£124 million), and in last week's Budget it was 7 per cent (£155 million) for 1997-98; by that year Britain's bilateral aid programme is likely to have fallen to three quarters of its 1993 value.

This reflects a lack of real commitment and responsibility towards developing countries. It is all the more unfortunate since potential HIV vaccines will have to be tested in countries with high levels of infection, such as those in sub-Saharan Africa.

If a vaccine is found to be effective in these countries, where the per-capita health budget is anything between \$4 and \$8 per year, host governments will clearly be unable to afford vaccination for their entire population, any more than they can yet afford the latest antiviral therapies.

A recent American study shows that AZT can considerably reduce mother-to-baby transmission, which runs at 30 per cent in Africa. In most developing countries, the cost of 1½/2 capsules

of AZT is equivalent to the annual per-capita health budget. The developing world, however, can offer research opportunities for AZT for mother-to-baby transmission, such as by the use of lower doses, or of higher doses for shorter concentrated periods.

We in a developed country will thus be using developing countries to prove the efficacy of vaccines and new therapies, but will potentially not be making the benefits of that research available to those who participated in it, or to others at risk.

This is surely unethical. Justice demands that those who bear the risks or burden of scientific investigation should share the benefits.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL ADLER,
University College London
Medical School,
The Mortimer Market Centre,
Mortimer Market,
Capper Street, WC1,
December 3.

From Professor Emeritus Gordon T. Stewart

Sir, Official and verifiable statistics prove that in the UK (as in most of Europe) Aids is still a very uncommon disease, with about 1,500 new cases per year confined to high-risk minorities among some homosexual men, drug addicts and their consorts.

It is essentially self-inflicted and avoidable, as is obvious from the lack of appreciable spread by heterosexual transmission in the general population, even in New York City, an orig-

inal epicentre of the disease. Surveillance there showed very few registrations of Aids other than in risk groups in the 74,016 cases registered between 1982 and March 1995.

This concentrates but does not minimise the problem. In New York City, 65 per cent of men, 70 per cent of women and 90 per cent of infants with Aids come from black/hispanic minorities. In the UK, the overall incidence of Aids between 1982 and 1995 in black women was 140 out of 100,000, compared with 2.9 in white and 1.6 in Asian women. Infants born to black women are 100 times more likely to suffer from Aids than those born to Asian women.

These figures reflect the high frequencies of Aids reported from some — by no means all — regions of the less-developed world, where Aids currently overlaps with an immense spread of all sexually-transmissible and many other indigenous infections, notably tuberculosis. The call for improvement in specific medication is undeniable, but the more urgent priority, and the only available method for successful prevention, is an understanding and explicit description of the risk behaviours and other lifestyle factors anywhere which bring about these immense differences.

I am, yours etc,
GORDON T. STEWART,
Professor of Public Health,
University of Glasgow, 1972-83,
Glasgow, Clifton Down, Bristol,
December 5.

South Downs at risk

From Sir Chris Bonington,
President of the Council for
National Parks, and others

Sir, The South Downs have long been celebrated for their great natural beauty, are a treasured part of our national inheritance and receive many more visits than any of our National Parks. Despite this they have never been given the recognition they deserve and urgently need, if they are to withstand the pressures placed upon them.

In 1992 an experimental Conservation Board was set up in response to public concern about the future of the Downs. This has shown that more co-ordinated planning and management by the 13 local authorities with land in the Downs can make a difference. However, the experiment is very vulnerable to collapse in 1998 when the current funding by the Countryside Commission ends.

We believe the time is now right to move beyond this fragile interim arrangement to a secure and permanent structure. The South Downs rank with the Broads and the New Forest as one of our finest tracts of extensive lowland countryside. We are calling on the Government and all political parties to give the Downs their rightful place, with protection, management, funding and status equivalent to that of our National Parks.

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS BONINGTON,
President, Council for National Parks,
DAVID J. BELLAMY,
President, Royal Society for Nature Conservation and Youth Hostels Association,
ROBIN CRANE,
Chairman, South Downs Campaign,
JONATHAN DIMBLEBY,
President, Council for the Protection of Rural England,
RODNEY LEGG,
Chairman, Open Spaces Society,
LLOYD OF BERWICK,
President, Society of Sussex Downmen,
CHARLES NUNNELEY,
Chairman, National Trust,
CHARLES SECRETY,
Executive Director, Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland),
JANET STREET-PORTER,
President, Ramblers Association,
Council for National Parks,
246 Lavender Hill, SW11,
December 5.

The grim reaper

From Mr John Crier

Sir, The driver who successfully prosecuted a farmworker for inconsiderate driving, when forced to crawl behind his combine harvester on a country road for one and a half miles (report, November 28), is to be congratulated on two counts.

Firstly for having brought a successful prosecution against selfishness, secondly for finding a farm vehicle which actually displayed numberplates. Most of the farmers I drive behind in Somerset seem to regard them as optional and unnecessary.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN NEWCOMB CRYER,
Box Cottage,
Stock Lane, Langford, Bristol.

In the brave days of old

From Mr Edward Griffiths

Sir, You report (Sport, December 2) that Lance Klusener, the new South African fast bowler, has "put the [Indian] Test batsmen to flight". This is not surprising, as I believe it is he of whom it was written: Lance Klusener of Portum by the nine gods he swore...

Yours sincerely,
EDWARD GRIFFITHS,
14 Mill Lane,
St Radigunds, Canterbury, Kent.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

OBITUARIES

RAPHAEL SAMUEL

Raphael Samuel, historian, died of lung cancer on December 9 aged 62. He was born on September 26, 1934.

After the death of E. P. Thompson in 1993, that of Raphael Samuel is the gravest loss to the profession of history — but to a special kind of history, rooted in left-wing politics, and aiming to rediscover the lives of the millions overlooked by historians of big names and big events.

Thompson and Samuel had much in common. Both learnt their trade in adult education, not in the universities. Both left the Communist Party in 1956 to devote themselves to the New Left, which sought to free the spirit of socialism from the dark record of Stalinism and also from the pragmatism of social democracy. In a speech in 1988, at a conference (or reunion) of "The New Left 30 Years On", Samuel recalled: "We were forward-looking and iconoclastic, breaking with age-old shibboleths."

He came from a Jewish family with roots in the East End of London, and spent his boyhood as a wartime evacuee in Buckinghamshire and then in Hampstead Garden suburb, where he went to the progressive King Alfred's School. After his parents were divorced (his father was a solicitor), Raphael was brought up by his mother Minna Keal, a gifted composer, with close links to his uncle, the historian Chimen Abramsky. Minna Keal, Abramsky and Samuel's wife were active and dedicated communists and the boy was initiated into the faith — though that word is unjust to the intellectual sophistication of scholarly Marxism.

Samuel was born to be an historian and was already in a Communist historians' discussion group as a precocious schoolboy. He had the vital

quality of living at the same time in the past, the present and the future.

Everything interested him, from public health to colonial rebellion and from street lighting to the tactics of the Chartist movement.

At Balliol College, Oxford, Samuel's tutor was Christopher Hill, an authority on 17th-century revolutionary traditions and another Marxist (also to leave the CP in 1956). He gained a first and began teaching at Ruskin College. He was a founder, with Stuart Hall and others, of *Universities and Left Review*, a journal born of the political turmoil caused by the simultaneous crises of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and a meeting in London addressed by yet another Marxist scholar, Isaac Deutscher.

Thompson had founded the *New Reasoner* and there was no room for two similar journals, so they merged in 1960 as *The New Left Review*, edited by Hall. The New Left was now a movement, with hundreds of activists who trod the road to Aldermaston and waved banners at demonstrations on all kinds of issues. Samuel was once arrested and, rather than save his time by pleading guilty and paying a fine, went to court to debate the right to remonstrate with the magistrate. He was fined anyway.

Inevitably, the atmosphere of the movement was, in a then popular phrase, one of creative chaos. A Soho coffee house, called The Partisan, was started not just as a rendezvous but as an enterprise, which, it was confidently believed, would finance the movement and the journal. In the 1950s it was difficult to lose money with a coffee house, but the New Left managed it.

Meanwhile, Samuel was rushing between London and Oxford, loyal to Ruskin, where



he went on teaching until the year of his death, despite opportunities to move to more prestigious jobs. Around him, a school of new historians grew up, some in academia and some writing as freelancers or holding down mundane jobs, for one of Samuel's tenets was that there should be no distinction between amateur and professional. From the 1960s, he was the moving spirit in a loose organisation called History Workshop

which held numerous large or small meetings up or down the country for the pooling of ideas and fresh knowledge. With NLR, Samuel brought contributors together for the *History Workshop Journal*.

In appearance, and in his clothing which was casual to the point of improvisation, Samuel never changed. His long wild hair and his narrow eager face were perfectly right for his fervent, restless personality. He was

slightly built and thin to the verge of being cadaverous, so that friends and students were sometimes unaware of the onset of cancer. In later years he was described as looking like a 1960s character, but perhaps he was more like a Bohemian of the era of Maudslayi.

Together with a New Left friend, Dennis Butt, he bought a beautiful old house in Spitalfields, the district of east London first settled by Hugue-

not refugees (to be succeeded in due course by waves of Jews and Bangladeshis). Besides being beautiful the house was quite large, but such houses could be picked up cheap before gentrification descended on Spitalfields. When that did happen the houses were mostly subjected to fashionable transformation. But in Samuel's house the creaky stairs, uneven floors and panelled walls were sacrosanct.

Indeed, tradition and revolution were the two poles of Samuel's compass. When it became customary on the Left to deplore what has come to be called the heritage industry, Samuel defended it. For him, popular songs, colloquial catchphrases and domestic objects of any kind were to be loved whether they had survived or whether they were being revived in fashion or advertising.

This was the theme of his book *Theatres of Memory*, which appeared in 1994 and which he planned to follow with a second volume. It was his only book as sole author, though he had collaborated on several, as well as contributing to many collections and writing countless articles and reviews.

Unlike some historians, Samuel read novels and poems and was often at the theatre or the cinema. His wife Alison Light, whom he married in 1987, is a lecturer in English literature at University College London. Samuel was always highly attractive to women, perhaps because they felt that he had to be taken care of. The marriage was supremely happy, and gave him, so far as anything could, a point of rest.

This year he was given the professorship which he should have had earlier, in his home patch, at the University of East London. He made plans for teaching and research, but did not live to implement them. His wife and his mother survive him.

DERRICK PUFFETT

Derrick Puffett, musicologist, died on November 14 aged 49. He was born on November 30, 1946.

AN INCISIVE and influential commentator on music, Derrick Puffett taught at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge for more than twenty years. Developing the discipline of music analysis in parallel with pioneering colleagues at King's College London, he inspired many generations of undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Puffett also edited the journal *Musical Analysis* for eight years and organised one of the earliest and most successful conferences on the subject to be held in this country. Although at Cambridge his teaching built on the work of Alexander Goehr and others, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that in bringing his discipline to the two great universities Puffett was for much of the time working almost single-handed. This was a remarkable feat, given the opposition he met with from certain quarters, and reflected the determination in his character that was evident even at the very end of his life.

Born and raised in Oxford, Derrick Robert Puffett took a first in music at New College in 1968. His DPhil thesis on the song cycles of Othmar Schoeck made a significant impact in the composer's native Switzerland and was published there in 1982. In Britain, Puffett's reputation went before him and he was appointed to a lectureship at Cambridge in 1984, where he was a Fellow of St John's.

Here he was able to supervise a succession of gifted research students and to become a focal point for his colleagues through his editorial activities. Visitors to his rooms were assured of a warm welcome, closely followed by a grilling about their own work, which rapidly turned into an exhilarating tutorial.

Puffett suffered from a form of muscular dystrophy and was confined to a wheelchair from childhood. But his marriage in 1989 brought him the pleasures and fulfilments of a cultured family life. Although his retirement from the university in 1994 through ill-health deprived him greatly of the human contacts he relished, his wife Kathryn's constant support allowed him to devote time and energy to his own writings. It was in these final years and in the face of increasing physical obstacles that Puffett produced his finest work.

Puffett was never merely a specialist on the music of one composer, or the kind of musicologist whose work fails to draw on a breadth of knowledge from other fields such as European literature and philosophy. Together with his earlier books on Strauss, his last writings on Tippett, Berg, Webern, Stravinsky, Debussy and others capture insights which will in due course be seen as landmarks in the critical understanding of those composers and their works.

Although he had been among the first British scholars in the field of music analysis to recognise and adopt the methods of the international music theory community, Puffett never allowed his formidable intellect to be seduced by mere theoretical rigour.

On the contrary, in his writings and no less in his conversation, theory and method were placed at the service of intense and sustained observation, motivated by nothing other than a love of the music itself. It was above all in showing how a truly extraordinary level of rigour could inform the empirical aspect of technical commentary on music that Puffett was a lasting inspiration to his students and colleagues alike.

He is survived by his wife Kathryn Bailey, herself a distinguished writer on music.

JOSÉ DONOSO

José Donoso, Chilean novelist, died in Santiago on December 7 aged 72. He was born on September 25, 1924.

IT WAS typical of José Donoso that he should have furnished, on the very last day of his life, an intriguing anecdote that will keep scholars at Spanish literature faculties scratching their heads for a very long time.

As he lay in bed, dying from the gastric ulcer which he acquired as a youth in Mexico, his daughter offered to read some poetry aloud to him. "T. S. Eliot or Vicente Huidobro?" she asked, certain that he would prefer the former, a lifelong favourite, to the latter, a slightly precious

Chilean poet of the first half of this century. "Huidobro," said Donoso, forcing a smile through his obvious pain. "Of course, Huidobro."

If Donoso is not as well known outside the Hispanic world as Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, Julio Cortázar or Carlos Fuentes, to whose widely celebrated novels his own are in no measure inferior, it is perhaps because of this gentle strain of contrariness. Born into a prosperous family of doctors and lawyers, and educated at The Grange School in Santiago (one of South America's finest), he worked first as a shepherd and next as a stevedore before taking a degree in English literature at the University of Chile.



Donoso's first stories were, in fact, written in English for the university magazine at Princeton in 1949, where he had obtained a postgraduate

scholarship. Six years later he published, with his own money and to wide acclaim, *Verano y otros cuentos* (Summer and other stories), never needing to worry about a publisher again.

His first novel, *Coronación* (Coronation), appeared in 1957, setting for him a fame in the Spanish-speaking world which he was never to let slip. The novel, set in the mansion of a moribund madwoman in her nineties, painted a world of ruin and rot. His next novel, *El lugar sin límites* (1967), The place without limits, pursued the same grotesquery in its portrayal of a godforsaken village in the deep south of Chile.

His methods, variously described by pundits as "sor-

did realism", "neurotic realism" and "grotesque realism" reached their apogee in 1970, in his brilliant novel *El obscuro pájaro de la noche* (The obscure bird of night). The novel is Donoso's allegory of a world in decomposition, and the author himself described it as "labyrinthine and schizophrenic... where the lived and the to-be-lived are mixed together". *Casa de Campo* (Country House), his next major novel, published in 1978, was also the story of an imagined world. "This is my best work," he was often to say.

Donoso left Chile in 1963, living first in Mexico before moving to the United States. In 1967, he settled down in Spain, "to get away from the English language", swimming against the tide of intellectuals who had left Franco's country to live in other parts. He rejected the idea of novels and novelists as tools for social change.

Nonetheless, "tired of being a foreigner", he returned at last to his native Chile in 1981. "I had forgotten how to write in 'Chilean'," he was to say, explaining his homecoming to friends, lamenting also that he had "missed the experience of Frei, Salvador Allende, and the Pinochet coup".

In Chile, he was not politically passive, being arrested once for speaking out for human rights, and later joining the short-lived Partido por la Democracia, dedicated to the downfall of General Pinochet. On his country's return to democracy, he was awarded one of the very few literary honours he was to receive in his lifetime, the Premio Nacional de Literatura de Chile.

He is survived by his wife, María Pilar, a writer, and his daughter.

DR CLIVE BREMNER CAMERON

Dr Clive Bremner Cameron, cancer specialist, died on November 13 aged 78. He was born in New Zealand on September 23, 1921.

AS A working member of the department of clinical pathology at the Royal Marsden Hospital, "Brem" Cameron was a respected specialist in his chosen field of biochemistry. It was, however, in another role that he made an outstanding and distinguished contribution both to the hospital and to the Institute of Cancer Research with which it was associated. In the early 1970s, he was elected by his consultant colleagues as chairman of the hospital's Medical Committee, a body which provided the forum for discussion of all matters of medical interest and which advised the board of governors on medical policy.

Cameron's appointment proved to be of great significance, and was to impose upon him untold demands of time and energy. It needs to be set against a background of the traditional rivalry between medical disciplines and, more importantly, of the external pressures (political, medical and academic) on postgraduate teaching hospitals in general and the Royal Marsden Hospital in particular.

Cameron soon emerged as a leader of integrity and vision, trusted and respected throughout the hospital and institute. The initial task of integrating and reconciling research interests was daunting and would take several years to complete. Cameron, who had no personal ambition other than to establish a meaningful and lasting union of the two organisations, approached the many difficult situations and personalities

involved with remarkable diplomacy, patience and resolve, as well as unfailing courtesy, kindness and humour. Even those who held contrary views or who found their personal ambitions opposed, felt bound to acknowledge his impartiality and wisdom. If anger or disappointment loomed, as was inevitable from time to time, Cameron's own feelings would be skilfully concealed lest any progress, however small, be



impaired. It is significant that, without known precedent, he was invited to remain as chairman of the Medical Committee for a second term of three years.

He subsequently became Dean of the Institute of Cancer Research and in the closest association with the Director of the Institute and his successor as Medical Committee chairman, he was able to continue the essential process of integration and to build on the foundation which he had already laid.

Clive Bremner Cameron was born in New Zealand and educated at King's College, Auckland and Otago University. Arriving in England on a merchant ship in 1946, he

worked for the New Zealand High Commission as part of a three-man team dealing with the resettlement of displaced persons. In 1948 he was sent out to Berlin to interview some of the thousands of refugees who had applied to settle in New Zealand.

Returning to medicine, he worked at St George's Hospital, Hyde Park Corner (now the Lanesborough hotel) for a decade, in the course of which he was also able to spend some time at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, where he became familiar with some of the latest advances in his subject. In 1961 he was appointed as a consultant in clinical pathology at the Royal Marsden, and he remained there until his retirement in 1982, serving on the hospital's board of governors from 1977.

From 1976 to 1981 he was also chairman of the South West Thames Regional Cancer Council.

By the time he retired he could take pride in the knowledge that the Royal Marsden Hospital and the Institute of Cancer Research were working effectively together in improving the diagnosis of malignant disease and the care of cancer patients.

Outside medicine, Cameron's great love was the countryside and country pursuits, and from 1982 he was able to devote himself to running his farm and estate at East Kennet Manor in Wiltshire. A keen huntsman, he was master of foxhounds with the Terworth Hunt from 1986 to 1989. During this period he also served on the board of governors of St Mary's Hospital in Cambridge.

In 1958 Brem Cameron married Rosalind Pater who, with two sons and a daughter, survives him.

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MR. CHURCHILL ON A PERILOUS MOMENT.
Mr. Churchill, the Minister of Munitions, addressed a large meeting last night in Bedford. He said they were gathered together in a grave hour.
The country is in danger as it has not been since the battle of the Marne saved Paris, and the battles of Ypres and of the Yser saved the Channel ports. The future of the British Empire and of democracy, and of civilization hang, and will continue to hang for a considerable period, in a balance and an anxious suspense. It is impossible, even if it were desirable, to conceal these facts from our enemies. It would be folly not to face them boldly ourselves. Indeed, I am inclined to think that most people in this country, in this wonderful island, are already facing squarely and resolutely the facts of the situation. We read in the newspapers and in some speeches which are delivered of appeals to the Government to tell the truth about the war, to tell the truth about our aims; but as a matter of fact the great bulk of

ON THIS DAY
December 11, 1917
To read this passage is to be reminded of the voice and words of Churchill 23 years later at another time when this country was in great danger.
The British people have got a very clear idea of how we stand and a still clearer idea of what we are aiming at. Anyone can see for himself what has happened in Russia. Russia has been thoroughly beaten by the Germans...
It is this melancholy event which has prolonged the war, that has robbed the French and the British and the Italian armies of the prize that was, perhaps, almost within their reach this summer: it is this event, and this event alone, that has exposed us to perils and sorrows

and sufferings which we have not deserved, which we cannot avoid, but under which we shall not bend. (Loud cheers.) There never was a moment in this war when the practical steps which we ought to take showed themselves more plainly, or when the choice presented to us was so brutally clear as it is to-night... Are not our war aims clear? Can we not discern what our war aims are? Do we not know in our hearts what our war aims are? Why, they are exactly what they were on that breathless night in August, 1914 (general cheering), when we knew that the Belgian frontier had been crossed by German armies in repudiation of their solemn covenant and of all law that had existed in the world; when that small weak people who trusted to the plighted word of German rulers were brutally and mercilessly trampled in the mire. Our war aims are the same as they were in 1914. We have not increased them, we have not diminished them, we shall not diminish them by one jot or tittle. (Renewed cheers.)

No private law remedy for excess detention

Ostia v Home Office and Another

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, Lord Justice Auld and Lord Justice Mummery [Judgment November 29]

Where a prospective plaintiff, who had been committed to prison and held in custody, had been detained in excess of the 112-day time limit between commitment and arraignment, without any further order of the court extending the period, no private law right of action for damages lay against the Home Office for false imprisonment or against the Crown Prosecution Service for breach of statutory duty.

The Court of Appeal so held: (i) dismissing an appeal by the plaintiff, Jeanette Ostia, from Miss Barbara Dohmann, QC, who, sitting as a deputy judge of the Queen's Bench Division (*The Times* May 8, 1996) on an application by the Home Office had struck out the plaintiff's claim for damages against it for false imprisonment, and

(ii) allowing an appeal by the CPS from the judge's refusal to strike out the plaintiff's claim against it for breach of the Prosecution of Offences (Custody Time Limits) Regulations (SI 1987 No 259), as amended by the Prosecution of Offences (Custody Time Limits) (Amendment) Regulations (SI 1989 No 767) and the Prosecution of Offences (Custody Time Limits) (Amendment) Regulations (SI 1991 No 1515).

The plaintiff, on the facts as stated, was entitled to compensation for the period of her detention in custody by the magistrates' court for trial at the crown court.

She was detained in prison under section 6 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980 and on a warrant of commitment sent to the governor which directed him to keep her there until she was "delivered in due course of law", a phrase accepted by the parties as referring to delivery to the crown court. The

expiry date of the 112-day time limit was specified on the warrant.

Following her detention at the prison for a period of 81 days in excess of that time limit she began an action against the Home Office, as the department with responsibility for the prison governor in whose custody she had been, and against the CPS for its failure to bring her before the court shortly before the expiry of the time limit so that she might be admitted to bail, as required by regulation 6 of the 1987 Regulations.

Mr Nicholas Blake, QC and Mr Tim Owen for the plaintiff; Mr Stephen Richards for the Home Office and the CPS.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE referred to the relevant statutory provisions set out at section 6(2) and (4) of the 1980 Act, section 2(1) and (3) of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985, regulations 5 to 8 of the 1987 Regulations made by the secretary of state in exercise of his powers conferred by the 1985 Act and sections 1(6), 3(6) and 4 of the Bail Act 1976.

His Lordship summarised the relevant facts, summarised by Lord Justice Giddens in *R v Maidstone Crown Court, Ex parte Clark* (1995) 1 WLR 831, 834, was that if a custody time limit, whether the 112 days or a period extended by the court, expired before arraignment in the crown court, the accused was automatically entitled to bail, the court's only power thereafter being to impose conditions on its grant.

His Lordship summarised Mr Richards' submissions: that the governor's duty had been to obey the order of the court; that after the expiry of the custody time limit, the plaintiff was to be regarded as in the custody of the crown court; that under section 6(3)(a) of the 1980 Act and under the direction given to him in the warrant, the governor's duty was to hold her until delivery to the crown court in due course of law; that he had not at any material time been called on to deliver her and could not lawfully take it on himself to release her.

Mr Richards had further argued that in any event the plaintiff had no right to be released after 112 days; her right was to be released on bail by order of the court; that although alerted by the terms of the warrant to the expiry date of the time limit the governor had no independent role in making any application to the court, nor any authority to release the plaintiff without an order of the court.

Mr Richards' submission was essentially correct. The plaintiff was in the custody of the crown court. Only by order of the court could that period of custody be brought to an end.

Once the time limit had expired without extension the crown court would have been obliged to order her release, but on bail and subject to such terms as the court could have imposed.

Once the time limit had expired the plaintiff was unlawfully detained and an order leading to her release could have been obtained either from the crown court or the Divisional Court. But it did not follow, in the absence of any such order, that the governor was guilty of false imprisonment: he was neither entitled nor bound to release her.

With regard to the claim against the CPS, his Lordship said that regulation 6 of the 1987 Regulations made it clear that the CPS had to bring an accused person before the court shortly before the expiry of the custody time limit and might be relieved of that duty only by direction of that court.

The regulation placed the onus for performance of the duty squarely on the CPS. It wholly failed to perform that duty, with the result that the plaintiff spent much longer in prison on remand than she should have done.

The issue was whether that statutory duty was a public law duty only or whether it gave rise to a private law right enforceable by a person injured by breach of the duty and so entitled to recover compensation. Although the context was novel,

it was a familiar question, the applicable principles, which were not in issue, being found in *R v Deputy Governor of Parkhurst Prison, Ex parte Hague* (1992) 1 AC 58 and *X (Minors) v Bedfordshire County Council* (1995) 2 AC 633.

The relevant provisions of the statute and the regulations had to be studied to determine whether Parliament and the secretary of state intended that anyone injured by failure of the CPS to perform its statutory duty should enjoy a private law right of action sounding in damages.

In seeking to understand the intention of Parliament and the secretary of state, regard had to be paid to the object and scope of the provisions, the class, if any, intended to be protected by them, and the means of redress open to a member of such a class if the statutory duty were not performed.

The object of the provisions was plainly to secure a prompt and sure prosecution in the prosecution of criminal offences where defendants were remanded in custody to await trial, and, if such expedition were lacking, to ensure that they did not languish in prison for excessive periods awaiting trial.

The protection of prospective defendants was thus an object of the provisions. When Parliament enacted section 22 of the 1985 Act it must have expected that custody time limits which the secretary of state was authorised to set by regulation would be realistic and achievable, and accordingly being extended by order of the court.

It was the 1985 Act which established the CPS, which was intended to be an efficient and highly professional prosecuting service. While the power conferred by section 22 on the secretary of state was expressed in broad terms, there was nothing to suggest that Parliament intended to give him power to create new private law rights of action.

Regulation 6 made it plain that the duty of ensuring that a defendant did not spend longer in custody than permitted by any relevant custody time limit was laid on the CPS. It was no doubt assumed, as it was plainly intended, that the CPS would perform its duty.

If for any reason it did not, a defendant injured by its failure was doubtless expected to apply for release on bail at once, such application being assured of success. There was nothing to suggest that the 1987 Regulations intended that either Parliament or the secretary of state foresaw the present unhappy conjunction of events.

It could not have been intended to confer a private law right of action for damages in the present circumstances. Support for that was to be found in *Elgouza v Chief Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis* (1995) QB 339.

His Lordship would accordingly conclude that the plaintiff's claim against the CPS should also be struck out.

The court was not in possession of the full facts and had accordingly to refrain from comment which might be unsound. It would, however, be a matter of acute concern if it were the case that the plaintiff had through no fault of her own spent an excessive time in prison on remand, and had no right to compensation for that injury.

It might be that there were parties other than the Home Office and the CPS from whom the plaintiff might be entitled to recover.

If not, and unless she was the author of her own misfortune, it would seem highly unjust if she were denied any compensation for what would, on the hypothesis, be an undoubted injury.

Lord Justice Mummery delivered a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Auld agreed with both judgments. Solicitors: Bobbets Machan, Bristol; Treasury Solicitor.

Pedestrian use sufficient qualification as road

Clarke v Kato and Others

Before Lord Justice McCowan, Lord Justice Waite and Lord Justice Potter [Judgment November 29]

The regular and incontestable use of a car park as a pedestrian route to a parade of shops was sufficient for the route to qualify as a road for the purposes of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and further consideration of whether or not use of the route by prams and bicycles amounted to vehicular use was unnecessary.

The Court of Appeal so held when dismissing an appeal by the Motor Insurers' Bureau from Mr Assistant Recorder Goodchild at Great Grimsby County Court on July 20, 1995 whereby he determined a preliminary issue that the car park at the east of the shops in the respondent, Ellen Kato Clark, had been injured, was a road within section 192 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Pursuant to the Motor Insurers' Bureau (Compensation of Victims of Uninsured Drivers) Agreement made on December 21, 1988 the MIB was required to satisfy judgments against uninsured drivers in respect of any "relevant liability" which was defined in the agreement as "a liability in respect of which a policy of insurance must be in force in order to comply with Part IV of the Road Traffic Act 1988".

The respondent, who had been walking through the car park on her way home, had been struck by a car driven by Paul Kato, who was not insured to drive or possessed of any other insurance. He was with Kato Smith who had allowed him to drive the car. The respondent had brought an action against Kato, Smith and the MIB for personal injury and consequential loss.

Section 192 of the 1988 Act provides: "(1) 'road' means any highway and any other road to which the public has access..."

Mr Howard Elton for the appellant; Miss Alison Hampton for the respondent.

LORD JUSTICE POTTER said that the car park was situated behind a parade of shops. There was a covered passageway from the car park to the middle of the parade.

The passageway and the ramp leading up to it were together designated for access by pedestrians, wheelchairs and perambulators.

They were not designed for, nor negotiable by cars although it was possible for cycles to use them. The sole vehicular access to and from the car park was by a short drive running from a public road. The entrance was effectively open at all times.

Pursuant to section 143 of the Act a policy of insurance was only compulsory when a vehicle was being used on a road. Thus the liability of the MIB to indemnify the respondent in respect of any judgment against Kato and Smith depended upon whether or not at the time of the accident the car park could properly be described as a road.

As far as the meaning of the word "highway" was concerned, its existence depended upon the establishment of a public right of passage whether on foot, on horseback or by vehicle, over the way concerned as a result of dedication or long usage.

However, the argument before the county court had turned entirely upon whether the car park might properly be described or regarded as "any other road to which the public has access". The issue was narrower than that since it was accepted that the public had access to the car park. The question was simply whether or not the whole or part of the car park came within the definition or concept of a "road" at all.

His Lordship considered the relevant case law including the Scottish case of *Harrison v Hill* (1932) 13 and *Giffin v Squires* (1938) 1 WLR 1105. It was apparent that to qualify as a road to which the public had access it was not necessary that the area concerned should enjoy either the usual appearance or common appellation of a road.

Quite apart from the policy considerations summarised in *Harrison v Hill* it seemed to his Lordship that the use of the words "highways and other roads" in the Act suggested that save for the question of public use as of right as opposed to de facto access the legislative intention was that the "highways and other roads" should bear equivalent meanings.

On the basis of the authorities a car park could properly be regarded as a road where it was not simply used as such in the sense that the passage of vehicles and pedestrians was not restricted to passage over the surface of the car park for the purpose of obtaining access to an area from a parking place but was used for what might be called "through" traffic, so as to alter its character from that of a car park to one which was also used as or part of a road.

The county court had found that a line of communication for the public between east and west existed via the passageway, ramp and car park.

The respondent had been able to rely upon regular and incontestable use of that line of communication as a pedestrian route between the hinterland lying to the east of the car park entrance and to the west of the parade of shops.

Thus being so it seemed to his Lordship that the concern of the assistant recorder as to whether or not use by prams and bicycles amounted to vehicular use sufficient for the route to qualify as a road was unnecessary.

His Lordship considered the relevant case law including the Scottish case of *Harrison v Hill* (1932) 13 and *Giffin v Squires* (1938) 1 WLR 1105. It was apparent that to qualify as a road to which the public had access it was not necessary that the area concerned should enjoy either the usual appearance or common appellation of a road.

Lord Justice McCowan and Lord Justice Waite agreed.

Solicitors: Goshchalsky, Hull; Wilkin Chapman, Grimsby.

Resolving unfair dismissal compensation calculations

Digital Equipment Co Ltd v Clements

Before Mr Justice Morison, Miss J. W. Collier and Lord Gledhill of Clee [Judgment December 5]

In a judgment which resolved previous conflicting decisions of industrial tribunals and the Employment Appeal Tribunal relating to the payment of compensation for unfair dismissal, the appeal tribunal held that part of a contractual termination payment which was over and above an employee's statutory redundancy payment should have been subtracted from the gross loss before deduction of a percentage reflecting the chance that he would have been dismissed for redundancy even if the dismissal had been carried out fairly.

The same principle regarding the way in which an excess redundancy payment was taken into account applied to any other payment which the employee received after and as a result of his dismissal such as money in lieu of notice, earnings from other employment, or contractual or ex gratia payments made by the employer.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal so held when reviewing a decision in the present case of a different panel of the appeal tribunal (Mr Justice Mummery, Mr E. Hammond and Mr R. H. Phipps (1996) ICR 829) allowing an appeal by the employers from

an industrial tribunal sitting at Reading in June 1995, awarding the employee, Mr S. Clements, compensation for unfair dismissal by his employers, Digital Equipment Co Ltd.

The appeal tribunal had allowed the appeal on the ground that the industrial tribunal had erred in deducting a contractual severance payment from the amount of the employee's loss before reducing the balance by 50 per cent to reflect the likelihood of the employee having been dismissed even if the procedure had been fair.

The employee had applied for the decision of the appeal tribunal to be reviewed on the ground, inter alia, that it was given in ignorance of the conflicting decision of a different panel of the appeal tribunal a month before *Car v Camden LBC* (1996) ICR 815.

Section 74 of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 provides: "(1) ... the amount of the compensatory award shall be such amount as the tribunal considers just and equitable in all the circumstances having regard to the loss sustained by the complainant in consequence of the dismissal in so far as that loss is attributable to action taken by the employer..."

"(2) If the amount of any payment made by the employer to the employee on the ground that the dismissal was by reason of redundancy ... exceeds the amount of the basic award which would be payable (as a redundancy payment) that excess shall go to reduce the amount of the compensatory award."

Mr David Richardson for the employers; Mr David Christie for the applicant.

MR JUSTICE MORISON said that the employee had been awarded £11,000 compensation for unfair dismissal by an industrial tribunal. The employee's appeal was allowed and the compensation was reduced to below £1,000.

The employee had applied for a review. The industrial tribunal had found that the dismissal was procedurally unfair and that had a fair selection procedure been followed there was a 50 per cent chance that the employee would have been retained.

His gross loss was calculated as £43,000. He had received a contractual termination payment which, exceeded his statutory redundancy payment by £20,500. The issue before the tribunal was whether his compensatory award should be £43,000 less £20,500 times 50 per cent, which was £11,250, or £43,000 times 50 per cent less £20,500, which was £1,000.

The industrial tribunal concluded that the larger award was correct and awarded the maximum sum in its power, namely £11,000. The appeal tribunal had allowed the employers' appeal.

The first task of an industrial tribunal considering a compensatory award was to ascertain the loss which the complainant sustained "in consequence of the dismissal in so far as that loss is attributable to action taken by the employer".

What loss did the employee sustain? If one left out any question of percentage reduction, as a result of his unfair dismissal his loss was £43,000 less the amount of compensation he received, namely, £22,500.

Following the decision in the House of Lords in *Polley v A. E. Dipson Services Ltd* (1988) ICR 142, industrial tribunals asked themselves what would have happened had the employer followed a correct procedure. They were asking what proportion of the loss was attributable to the wrongful action of the employer.

The tribunal determined as best it could the chances of the employee having been dismissed even if the employers had acted fairly. In the present case the tribunal put that percentage at 50 per cent. That was the appropriate percentage of the employee's gross loss which he was entitled to be compensated.

The alleged justification for the lower award was that the loss which the employee sustained was £43,000 and it was to that figure that the 50 per cent reduction should be applied. Otherwise, it was said, the employee would get full credit for the compensation he paid the employer but only for a proportionate part of it. The fallacy

of that argument was to minimise the word "loss". The employee's net loss was not £43,000 but £22,500. In calculating his loss full credit was given for the contractual payment made.

The appeal tribunal's conclusion was that the decision in *Derwent Coalworks v Kirby* (1995) ICR 49 and *Clements-Clarke International Ltd v Manley* (1979) ICR 74 could not be accepted as good law and should not be followed.

2 That an excess redundancy payment should be taken into account as any other payment which the employee received after and as a result of his dismissal, such as money in lieu of notice, earnings from other employment or contractual or ex gratia payments made by the employer, whether payments were made on the ground of redundancy or not.

There was no ring-fencing for excess redundancy payments as stated in *Cox v Camden* which should not be followed on that point.

Accordingly, the original appeal in the present case had not been correctly decided. The employee was entitled to the higher award.

The appeal tribunal would review the decision and conclude that the employers' appeal would be dismissed and the order of the industrial tribunal affirmed.

Solicitors: Mr P. N. Balas, Reading; Free Representation Unit.

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Time does not run against traffic examiner

Swan v Vehicle Inspectorate

Before Lord Justice Schiemann and Mr Justice Butterfield [Judgment November 11]

A traffic examiner employed by the vehicle inspectorate to investigate traffic offences, but not authorised to decide whether to prosecute, was not a "prosecutor" within the meaning of section 61 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

Accordingly, the time limit for laying an information provided by section 61(1) did not run from the time when evidence sufficient to warrant the proceedings came to the knowledge of the investigating traffic examiner, but from the time when such evidence came to the knowledge of a person authorised to prosecute.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held, dismissing Wayne Swan's appeal by case stated from the decision of Coventry Justices on February 27, 1996, that information laid against him were valid and convicting him of four offences of using a motor vehicle while uninsured against third-party risks.

The traffic examiner had sufficient knowledge of the offences more than six months before June 1, 1996, when the appellant was driving for 12 months but he carried on driving coaches. On May 3, a traffic examiner interviewed the appellant under caution and he admitted driving while disqualified.

On June 1, the traffic examiner submitted a full report to the senior traffic examiner, and information were laid on November 24.

It was clear that although the traffic examiner had sufficient knowledge of the offences more than six months before June 1, the senior traffic examiner did not obtain that knowledge until after that date.

Section 127(1) of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980 prohibited, except as otherwise provided, a magistrate from proceeding to try an information laid more than six months after the commission of an offence.

An exception was created by section 61 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 which set out time limits for offences including driving while disqualified and

be brought by virtue of this section more than three years after the commission of the offence.

"(6) Schedule 1 to this Act shows the offences to which this section applies."

Schedule 1 to the 1988 Act applied section 6 to offences of driving while disqualified and using a motor vehicle while uninsured against third-party risks.

Mr John William Gibson for the appellant; Mr Patrick Sadd for the vehicle inspectorate.

LORD JUSTICE SCHIEMANN said that on March 18, 1995, the appellant, a coach driver, was disqualified from driving for 12 months but he carried on driving coaches. On May 3, a traffic examiner interviewed the appellant under caution and he admitted driving while disqualified.

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driving without insurance.

It was submitted before the justices on behalf of the appellant that all relevant information relating to the offences had come to the knowledge of the traffic examiner more than six months before the laying of the informations.

The vehicle inspectorate submitted that it was not the traffic examiner, but the senior traffic examiner's knowledge which was relevant.

The justices found as a fact that the traffic examiner had no authority to determine whether a person should be prosecuted; it was the senior traffic examiner who made the decision whether to prosecute.

On appeal, counsel for the appellant submitted that any person authorised to investigate whether an offence had been committed, as the traffic examiner was, was a "prosecutor" for the purposes of section 61 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

But, in his Lordship's judgment, the mere fact that someone was investigated for an offence by a person with apparent authority was not enough to make the person investigating the "prosecutor".

The question for the opinion of the court should read: "Is a traffic examiner, employed by the vehicle inspectorate but not authorised to take the decision whether or not to prosecute, a prosecutor for the purposes of section 61 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988?"

Thus reframed the answer was in the negative.

Mr Justice Butterfield agreed.

Solicitors: Lester Dixon & Debbas, Nuneaton; Harner Bell & Co, Worcester.

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Squatters risk

Aldridge Estates Investments Co Ltd v McCarthy and Others

Before Lord Justice Gledhill of Clee [Judgment November 29]

Insurers were entitled to avoid policies of insurance for property where the level of unoccupancy and the presence of squatters had not been disclosed.

Mr Justice Auld so held in the Queen's Bench Division on October 29 when dismissing the plaintiff's claim on a block policy of insurance in respect of a large

portfolio of mostly residential properties in Greater London against defendant insurers.

HIS LORDSHIP said that even if there had been a licensed premises, he would have concluded that they did increase the risk of internal and external damage and were therefore a material circumstance. Even if they preserved the property they preserved the risk to the danger of illegal connection to services.

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Increasing the agony

Problem pages are now making their way into the broadsheets

Ask journalists about the most popular items in their newspapers — the weather report, television listings, the crossword, the horoscope — and most of them would have no idea who edited them or how they get into the paper every day.

Another of the most popular items in any tabloid, as was demonstrated by the emotion shown by readers after the death of the *Daily Mirror's* Marjorie Proops, is the agony aunt — and Proops's successor as the doyenne of agony aunts is Deirdre Sanders, whose *Dear Deirdre* column appears daily at the back of *The Sun*.

Agony aunts are easy to mock. Yet macho journalists who think real journalism occurs only on the front pages would be humbled to learn the human tragedies agony aunts confront every day as they try to alleviate the miseries of life behind the closed doors — and not just the bedroom doors — of so many British homes.

Mrs Sanders, a trained counsellor, has a staff of nine, including five other trained counsellors. She gets about a thousand letters a day, mostly from women. All are answered within a week and urgent cases involving violence, child abuse, unwanted pregnancies or court actions are answered by return. Another thousand readers a



Agony aunts, clockwise from top left, Anne Atkins, Deirdre Sanders, Virginia Ironside and Miriam Stoppard

PAPER ROUND

Brian MacArthur

day, mostly men, call *The Sun's* 0891 helpline.

It is a gruelling life dealing with so much misery and Mrs Sanders admits that she herself sees a counsellor to offload the emotional burdens created by her work. One Christmas, for instance, she got a taped message from an out-of-work miner whose wife had divorced him and won custody of the children. The first weekend the children came to stay, he smothered them to death, taped his message, posted it, went home and shot himself. That reader was beyond help. Most are not. When a mother wrote anonymously to say she was going to kill herself and her seven-week-old baby, Mrs Sanders contacted the NSPCC and Parents Anonymous and put the number of Parents Anonymous in the paper for the mother to ring. At 5pm that afternoon she did and she and her baby were saved.

What Deirdre Sanders in *The Sun* and now Miriam Stoppard in the *Daily Mirror* offer is serious tabloid journalism — but misery is not confined only to readers of the mass-market tabloids. So editors of the broadsheets, as they search for a wider audience and in particular for more women readers, are increasingly experimenting with the introduction of agony aunts. Both *The Independent* (with Virginia Ironside) and *The Guardian* have problem pages, but it is *The Daily Telegraph* which has been causing waves.

When Mrs Proops died, *The Daily Telegraph* wrote a sardonic leading article posing as a letter to an agony aunt sent from heaven. "I wonder if I always did the right thing," wrote M. "I said they should change the laws to allow homosexuality, abortion and easier divorce. I said people should do what they really wanted and not worry about morality and religion and all that stuff... I reckoned it was better to fulfil yourself even if it sometimes meant other people getting hurt... from where I sit today, some of those old teachings don't look so stupid. So please can someone tell me, where did I go wrong?"

Within a month of her death, an agony column which counters the views that leader gently mocked in *Dear Marjorie* has

now been introduced in *The Daily Telegraph*. "Agony Atkins" was launched last week. It was an event which could easily have rendered some *Telegraph* readers apoplectic. So far the mailbag of problems has been very light. Mrs Atkins herself said there had been more letters of support than letters seeking her advice.

Mrs Anne Atkins, the wife of the Rev Shaun Atkins, a vicar in west London, is an agony aunt who is very much in the *Telegraph* mould — she recently criticised the Church of England for tolerating homosexuals on *Thought for the Day*. That is obviously why her first column has been so roundly condemned by other agony aunts and earned a philippic from Polly Toynbee in *The Independent* — which will undoubtedly make Charles Moore, the *Telegraph's* Editor, believe that he has chosen well.

"My four-year-old throws toys at his little sister. How can I persuade him to stop?", asked one correspondent last week. There was no Proops nonsense here. "Tell him you'll smack him if he does it again," advised Mrs Atkins.

Another correspondent, returning

home early from a classical concert, found her husband trying on her underwear. She and her husband needed counselling, said Mrs Atkins, and advised a call to the Tavistock Clinic and a talk with a close girlfriend.

According to Mrs Atkins, there is a hunger for Christian common sense and she is offering a useful information service. But Claire Rayner, one of the most experienced agony aunts, accuses her of claiming the moral high ground but behaving immorally by offering help, yet refusing, unlike the tabloid agony aunts, to answer letters individually.

Experienced agony aunts and editors of women's magazines all share Polly Toynbee's warning against adopting too simplistic a view of human morality. "In the real world, 80 per cent of people support abortion; sex before marriage is the norm; and the idea of being locked into an indissoluble marriage with a partner you never had sex with is grotesque," Polly Toynbee said.

Could it be the case that the agony aunts of *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* are more serious and more in touch with the complex causes of human agony than Agony Atkins of *The Daily Telegraph*?

Changing world calls time on Cooke's tour

Although the reader who wrote me a "Watch out, sister!" letter will not believe it, I am not a teeth-on-edge feminist who sits around waiting for fresh examples of man's inhumanity to woman.

So indifferent am I to political correctness, I actually heard the "sexist" *Letter from America* without noticing that Alistair Cooke's beautifully modulated words could be taken to mean that he regarded rape as no more than boys-will-be-boys.

My husband and I thought that Cooke was talking genially about "wolf-whistling" in the American armed forces, and drove on into the dark confident that if there were more broadcasters who sounded like that, all would be right with the radio world.

Because it would. People do know, don't they, that this 88-year-old performs this 50-year-old weekly *Radio 4* miracle as if it was a live conversation? Cooke takes the trouble to go into a BBC studio in New York City, mount a stage, and speak his words from a lectern into a microphone, because he believes that is what broadcasting is about. He could prerecord the whole thing from his Bath chair. But he doesn't. After these years of brilliance and grace under pressure, he does not deserve the humiliation of pre-recorded by the BBC because of his advanced age.

Nor do his listeners deserve having his spontaneity interrupted. But there must be no more *Letter from America* when Cooke packs it in. He may be ageless but his point of view is not.

"America" does not exist. It was a nebulous place when Columbus discovered it in the form of the island of San Salvador, even more so when John Donne discovered it in the body of his mistress "O My America, my New Found Land".

The "America" of Alistair Cooke is a 1940s concept, the name of the friendly giant cousin across the Atlantic who came to our aid during two world wars. The British weekly *The Economist* started its *American Survey* in January 1942 in swift and warm response to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941. *The Economist* continues the American label on its much-read section, in spite of regular protests from the western hemisphere that Canadians, Argentinians and Mexicans deserve the adjective quite as much as those who salute the flag with hand on heart.

My idea of political incorrectness is calling the United States "America". This cosy shorthand can be indulged in by a self-confident, narrowly aimed publication such as *The Economist*.

But the globalised, democratised BBC should give it up. Wheeler on *America*, Robert Hughes's *Made in America* out, out. The options, I'll admit, are as ugly as most

politically correct phraseology. "The Yew Es" is bad as a noun and worse as an adjective, while "the States" itself has a rusty, 1930-ish sound. But the effort has to be made.

The use of a single nickname to cover such a motley, unhomogenous continent-sized expanse as the United States has never been less apt. The new wave of immigration is turning the country from one which looked back at Motherland Europe into one which faces west and south, speaks a lot of Spanish and hasn't a clue what "special relationship" means.

Fussy? Tell that to a Scot or Welshman the next time you watch them hearing an American saying "you English". If it is not pedantic to try to explain to Americans that the United Kingdom is more complex than "England", it is not prissy to ask that "America" be dropped for "United States".

Anyway, the very idea that one man could encompass a country as big as the United States reeks of deckchairs and steamer rugs.

It implies a long expensive journey which a newspaper or broadcasting organisation can afford only one representative to make.

Journalism doesn't work that way any more. Major newspapers don't have "American" correspondents these days. They have correspondents in New York or Los Angeles or "US editors". Meanwhile, specialist reporters from HQ criss-cross the planet, drop in on areas of interest, and are back in the office by Monday.

Besides, the Internet and communications are changing the world into communities defined by interests, not nationalities.

Whenever the sorry day comes to say goodbye to *Letter from America*, we will perhaps recognise what has marked the programme's greatness. It is the offering of a seasoned personal view that takes in a great slice of history, that remembers the Great Depression and the Hollywood Ten and that knows what it is like to have drunk a daiquiri mixed by the hand of J.F.K. himself at Hyannis Port in sum, trustworthy judgment delivered in an incomparably intelligent and classless speaking voice.

One other essential ingredient in *Letter from America* which must be recognised is the link between the familiar and the strange. Other parts of the world now need this *Letter from*... treasure India, China, South Africa. But not "America".

It is no longer a faraway place of which we long to know more — not these days when one of the penalties of having an American accent in London is having to hear the tale of every taxi driver's trip to Disneyland.



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Blair pitches for the female vote

EAGER to counter recent research which found that women find him "smarmy" and too smiley, Tony Blair is to make a pitch for the female vote next week by appearing on Radio 4's influential *Woman's Hour*.

He is unlikely to get a smooth ride from his interviewer, Jenni Murray, however. Blair failed to make it into a list of "Top 50 Men of Our Times" in a poll of the programme's listeners. John Major, who guested on *Woman's Hour* last month, did make it onto the list, although it is impossible to say exactly how popular he is because the list had no rankings.

"Since we had already had the Prime Minister on, we decided to invite Mr Blair in the interest of political balance. It doesn't matter that he did not make it into the programme's Top 50 Men because he has very interesting things to say to women. At least that's what it says here," a *Woman's Hour* insider says.

How careless

TO LOSE one business editor, Mr Neil, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose two looks like carelessness. There have been ructions at *Scotland on Sunday* where Andrew Neil has lost two of his top business



Major is in the "Top 50 Men of Our Time" but Blair is not



hacks. Rob Brown, who wrote a blistering critique of Neil's biography before discovering the combative former Editor of *The Sunday Times* was to become his new boss, has resigned to take up a job as media editor on *The Independent*. His departure was swiftly followed by that of Simon Bain to the *Herald*. Bain, himself a former business editor of *Scotland on Sunday*, was bowed aside by Brown for the top business job only three months ago. More departures are expected. Jim Seaton, the paper's Editor, who had planned to retire after the election, has decided firmly on February whether the country has gone to the polls or not.

Sweet revenge

MIFFED about losing their head of development and

strategy, Paul Robinson, to rival commercial broadcaster Talk Radio earlier this year, bosses at BBC Radio have been plotting their revenge. Robinson is one of 22 senior Beeb executives who recently completed a gruelling MBA course at Bradford University's Management Centre, courtesy of the BBC licence-payer. As he decided to defect to Talk Radio as general manager two weeks before the course ended, however, the corporation has banned him from a special celebratory graduation ceremony it is holding for the students in January. If he wants to attend, Robinson, who passed the MBA course with a distinction, has been told that he will have to refund to the BBC his £20,000 course fees.

Considering this a rather steep price to pay for a glass of

BBC bubbly and a few bite-size canapés, Robinson has decided to hold on to his money. Instead, he made a lonely trip to Bradford last weekend to pick up his certificate on his own.

WHEN not looking to ban Christmas golden oldie hits from the airwaves, the bosses at Radio 1 are looking to fill the newly created post of head of music policy. Hotly tipped is the popular Jeff Smith, a former producer with the station who now runs his own production company. Wise Buddha, Brian Stephens, editor of programmes at Radio 2, is in the running to take up the same job at Radio 2.

Cup in arms

THERE are many anomalies within the BBC and the canteen prices are no exception. A survey conducted by the Beeb's in-house newspaper *Ariel* has found shocking inconsistencies in the costs of a cup of coffee at various BBC centres. In Edinburgh, for instance, a canteen coffee is a snip at 18p, in Manchester it is 23p but at Television Centre in London you would be asked to cough up the outrageous sum of 30p.

Those with the saddest plight of all, however, must surely be the 170 staff at BBC Nottingham who do not have a canteen at all. "For us in Nottingham, this subject is like bald men discussing combs," said one.

THE TIMES

2

INSIDE
SECTION
2
TODAY



ARTS

How Richard Eyre grew up at the National Theatre
PAGES 31-33



HOMES

The would-be buyer who was gazumped at every turn
PAGE 37



SPORT

Stewart brings familiar flair to launch of car
PAGES 38-44

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
42, 43

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 11 1996

Clarks to spin off factory outlets in shake-up

By Sarah Cunningham

C&J CLARK, Britain's second-largest private company, is planning to spin off its fast-growing factory outlet operations as it seeks to refocus on its core shoe manufacturing and retailing business.

Two companies are understood to have approached Clarks about a whole or partial sale of its outlets in Street, Somerset, and Kendal in the Lake District. Coopers &

Lybrand has been appointed to sound out potential investors. An outright disposal could raise as much as £50 million, although Clarks is thought to favour a joint venture, with the longer-term aim of floating the business.

Roger Pedder, chairman of Clarks, said: "We feel that to retain the whole factory outlets business is not a good option because we are a shoe company, and the factory outlets would always be competing for

capital and management resources." Mr Pedder said Clarks as a whole was still looking to float in about two years' time.

Shareholders in Clarks, which is 70 per cent family owned, have been informed of the plan and initial reactions have been positive. The business has been through a major shake-up since Tim Parker was brought in as chief executive from Kenwood Appliances in January. In July Clarks announced the closure of three factories and

1,400 job cuts, reducing the worldwide workforce to around 17,000. Mr Parker said at the time that the cuts were necessary to "address the poor performance of our core footwear operations".

Flotation of Clarks, which had sales of more than £730 million last year, has been on the cards since family shareholders joined battle in 1995 over whether to accept a £184 million takeover bid from Berisford International. The offer was narrowly

rejected. Disposing of the factory outlets should help appease shareholders who have felt unhappy about the company's direction.

Companies thought likely to take an interest include RAM-Eurocentres, which is already in a 50-50 joint venture with Clarks in a Doncaster factory outlet. Others likely to figure are BAA-McArthur Glen, the Anglo-American factory outlet joint venture, as well as other operators in the sector, such as Freepoint Leisure and Value Retail.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET

FTSE 100	4635.7	(+24.1)
Yield	3.96%	
FTSE All share	1974.82	(+11.48)
Nikkei	20822.12	(+218.41)
Dow Jones	6487.11	(+33.17)
S&P Composite	751.70	(+1.94)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	100 1/4%	(100 1/4%)
Yield	6.67%	(6.67%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month bank bill	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
Libor 3m	110 1/4	(109 1/4)

STERLING

New York	1.8510*	(1.8470)
London	1.8517	(1.8474)
DM	2.5865	(2.5844)
FF	6.5814	(6.5838)
SP	1.2190	(1.2187)
Yen	187.21	(186.68)
£ index	92.2	(92.0)

US \$ DOLLAR

London	1.8530*	(1.8580)
DM	2.5770	(2.5820)
SP	1.2278*	(1.2283)
Yen	113.28*	(113.45)
£ index	92.2	(92.1)

TOKYO CLOSE

Yen close	113.80	
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NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Feb)	823.06	(823.45)
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GOLD

London close	338.36	(338.95)
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* denotes midday trading price

Northern fights bid with merger

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

NORTHERN ELECTRIC yesterday attempted to fend off the unwanted bid advances of CE Electric with plans to merge a large chunk of its business with another electricity company.

Northern will merge its electricity and gas supply operations — the parts that cover billing and customer service — with another company if the bid by CE Electric, the bid vehicle for the US grouping led by CalEnergy, fails. Northern, which says such a merger will deliver annual savings of £28 million, will not say with which company it is involved in advanced talks. Scottish Hydro-Electric and United Utilities have been tipped, although one of the other independent regional electricity companies, such as South-east or London, could emerge as the likely partner. Yorkshire Electricity yesterday ruled itself out of the running.

With less than two weeks remaining on the bid clock, Northern also unveiled plans to lift its dividend for the year to March 1998 by 17 per cent and thereafter increase it by 7 per cent. The company also intends further generation development in partnership with Rolls-Royce and expansion in upstream gas through joint venture.

More details of Northern's

strategy will be revealed today in information sent to shareholders.

Northern said that the interests of the two regional companies would be broadly equal. It said efficiencies would be won through maximising gas and electricity buying and integrating billing, customer service and administration.

The joint venture, subject to regulatory approval, would begin next year and would therefore be ready for the competitive market in domestic electricity due to begin in 1998. By that time, competition in household gas, which is already being phased in, would be nationwide.

Northern's defence comes after CE Electric raised its bid last week from 630p a share to 650p.

David Morris, Northern's chairman, said: "We can pay these higher dividends because of Northern Electric's strong financial position. Furthermore, the options available for our supply business — which conservatively we have not included in our projections — provide significant additional upside."

Northern's strategy was dismissed by CE Electric, David Sokol, chairman and chief executive, said: "Northern Electric's latest press release describes speculative claims — CE Electric's final offer is real." CE Electric, led by the junk-rated CalEnergy, said the dividend policy of Northern Electric increased the company's exposure to financial risk.

Northern's shares rose 6p to 611 1/2p on the plans. Some industry watchers thought Northern's defence could be enough to secure its second successful battle against a hostile bidder.

A decision is imminent from Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, on the bid for Northern. He must make an announcement on whether the bid should be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission by next Monday. City fears over a referral have depressed Northern's share price, which has continued to trade well below the first offer price from CE Electric.

Pennington, page 25

Channel 5 costs leap by £50m

By Eric Roby

THE shareholders of Channel 5 are to reveal next week that the broadcaster's launch costs have climbed by £50 million. The extra funds will be spent on the effort to finish retaining TVs and video machines in some 14 million homes to ensure that they can receive the channel without interference. Channel 5 is scheduled to make its debut on March 30, three months later than originally planned.

Channel 5's shareholders — Pearson and United News & Media, both of Britain; Warburg Pincus, the American investment bank; and CLT, the Luxembourg broadcaster — confirmed that the total returning costs will reach £150 million or more, up from the initial estimate of £60 million and the revised estimate of £100 million.

Pearson is expected to confirm the £150 million figure on Tuesday or Wednesday next week, when it is scheduled to release an end-of-year trading statement. David Elstein, Channel 5's chief executive, said that about four million of the 14 million homes in its broadcast area had been retuned. Interference clears, page 27



Goal achieved: Guy Ashkan, Saints chairman, left, and Rupert Lowe did a reverse deal

Takeover nets share quote for Saints

By Alasdair Murray

SOUTHAMPTON will become the latest football club to float next month when it completes a reverse takeover by Secure Retirement, a property development group, valuing the club at £10.1 million.

The Saints believe the listing will help in the relocation from The Dell, its present cramped ground, to a 30,000 capacity stadium on the city's edge, costing around £30 million and including shops, an athletics track and other facilities. The float will enable Southampton to gain access to new financing, while the club will receive an immediate £3 million boost of cash

from Secure Retirement's balance sheet.

Dealings begin on December 24 and the new company will be valued at £48 million. Fans will have to pay almost £600 for a stake as the minimum shares that can be bought at the 58p offer price is 100.

Rupert Lowe, chairman of Secure Retirement who will continue as chairman of the new Southampton Leisure Holdings, said: "We are aiming to create in Southampton a footballing force for the millennium and, in the new stadium, a focal point for the local community."

MacGregor joins board of Unigate

JOHN MACGREGOR, the former Cabinet minister, has joined the board of Unigate, the dairy products group, as a non-executive director.

The Conservative MP for South Norfolk is already on the board of Associated British Foods, the sugar and Ryvita manufacturers, and Slough Estates, the property company. Mr MacGregor worked alongside Ian Martin, chairman of Unigate, and Ross Buckland, chief executive, when he was Agriculture Minister from 1987 to 1989.

Mr MacGregor is the first Unigate non-executive director to have a background in politics.

Freemans links up lottery deal

By Jon Ashworth

CAMELOT is linking with Freemans, the mail-order catalogue company, in a controversial deal that gives it access to more than one million homes across the UK.

Shoppers will receive a £1 lottery ticket voucher for every £10 they spend, fuelling sales and providing a boost to Camelot's profits.

The National Lottery operator will keep 50 per cent of all income from the deal, after costs have been deducted, with the remainder going to Good Causes. Freemans is paying

an undisclosed fee to become an official National Lottery partner. The agreement will anger home-shopping rivals, including Littlewoods, which has seen its pools operations hit hard by lottery sales.

Freemans, owned by Sears, is the second consumer group to sign up with Camelot's merchandising arm, National Lottery Enterprises. McCain Foods, the frozen chips manufacturer, will use the lottery name, logo and slogans on a range of promotions, starting on January 6. McCain intends to put miniature lottery balls inside bags of oven chips,

entitling customers to send off for free Lucky Dip lottery tickets.

Camelot has invited bids of at least £100,000 from up to 10 preferred partners, and has been inundated with offers since the bidding process started in March.

Freemans will pay an undisclosed marketing partnership fee in return for a two-year arrangement, beginning on January 1 and supported by extensive advertising. It will also pay Camelot for all lottery tickets purchased, at a cost potentially running into millions of pounds.

Freemans has about one million regular customers — or agents — and enjoys annual sales of about £500 million. Sears announced last week that it was looking at selling Freemans, or collaborating in a joint venture, as part of its drive to focus on core activities. Mail-order revenues have slipped since Sears bought the business in 1988.

Freemans' agents will receive flyers, emblazoned with the lottery logo, saying: "Only Freemans can make you a home-shopping millionaire".

Pennington, page 25

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Nationwide Life	37.80
Black Horse Life	46.38
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Nationwide Life	76.31
Nat West Life	82.36
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Wax Lyrical lights the way to expansion

BY CLARE STEWART

WAX LYRICAL, the privately owned high street candle retailer, has announced a management buy-in and revealed its burning ambition to double in size within three years.

Iain McGourty, currently managing director of Ernest Jones, the Signet-owned jewellery group, is to become the firm's managing director on January 1 and is acquiring a 10 per

cent stake. Wax Lyrical was set up in 1990 by two former management consultants Marjorie Bannister, 34, and Mark Chessell, 33, and has 32 shops. Both founders will retain a controlling stake of around 70 per cent although they will hand over executive management control.

"We realised we had reached a stage where we could see that a management more skilled in retail would be better for the company,"

said Mrs Bannister. She added that both she and Mr Chessell would remain "active non-executive directors" within the group.

Mr McGourty said the company planned to expand by opening between 8-12 new stores a year and look to overseas markets by appointing country franchisees. Immediate plans could be financed from company resources. A market flotation was a possibility. The company

reported sales of just under £11 million last year with operating profits of £1 million. It employs 300 staff.

The group says it has a 10-20 per cent share of the UK candle market, which is estimated to be worth £50-70 million. Within the shops candles, from decorated to scented, make up just over one quarter of sales while other products sold include table decorations, gifts and home fra-

grance. As a specialist retailer, says Mr McGourty, Wax Lyrical has no direct competitor though department stores are significant candle sellers.

This Christmas Wax Lyrical will expect to sell around 35 million candles. Despite this seasonal rush, Britons are apparently near the bottom of the Euro-league for candle buying. Scandinavians buy the most while the Dutch buy ten times more candles than the British.

Inquiry into directors of Facia 'necessary'

BY JASON NISSE

CHRISTOPHER Harrison, the former chairman of Facia, Stephen Hinchliffe's collapsed retail empire, yesterday told creditors owed more than £100 million that the conduct of the directors should be investigated by its liquidators.

Mr Harrison chaired the Facia creditors' meeting in Leeds after Mr Hinchliffe refused to attend on legal advice. The collapse of Facia in May is being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office.

Mr Harrison sat silently through the meeting. However, a statement from him was read out. It said: "The chairman refuses to answer any questions as to the cause of the collapse of the Facia Group as this will be investigated by the liquidators. They will look at the conduct of the directors, which the chairman accepts as necessary, and the role of third parties."

Creditors, led by Sears, the retailer, which claims to be owed £30.1 million, appointed Malcolm Cohen and Peter Copp of BDO Stoy Hayward, the accountants, as liquidators in preference to Mr Hinchliffe's choice, Brendan Guilfoyle of Geoffrey Martin and Company in Leeds.

Earlier Mr Hinchliffe's solicitors, Peters and Peters, had put out a statement. This placed the blame for the collapse of Facia on third parties and called for an

investigation into the role of Sears, United Mizrahi Bank of Israel, which lent £7.4 million to Facia, and KPMG, the receivers appointed by United Mizrahi. "So far as Mr Hinchliffe is concerned, the Facia Group need not have collapsed and could have survived," the statement said.

Speaking after the meeting, Mr Cohen said that it was too early to say what he would be investigating but that he would look closely at any issue brought to his attention by creditors.

At the meeting it was revealed that, after paying off United Mizrahi, the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise, the Facia empire owes a total of £101 million. However, the total assets available to pay those debts may only be £3.06 million, leaving creditors with just 3p in the pound.

This is towards the lower end of the expectations of KPMG, the receivers, who had said there could be as much as 10p in the pound. KPMG has sent a report to the Department of Trade and Industry on Facia, which is believed to recommend the disqualification of Mr Hinchliffe as a director. He and Mr Harrison are facing disqualification proceedings over the 1993 collapse of Boxgrey, a tennis court-maker.

Diary, page 27



Clear view: Eddie Boss, left and Robert Atkin, finance director, said Anglian has healthy orders for the second half

Shake-up pays dividends at Anglian

INTERIM results at Anglian, the window builder, are showing the first fruits of the new management team's strategy. Pre-tax profits are up from £4.5 million to £9.5 million in the six months to September 28 (October August writes).

Earnings per share rose to 7.3p from 3.5p and the dividend rises 20 per cent to 3.6p.

Eddie Boss, chief executive since the start of the year, said commercial turnover rose 22 per cent to £19.5 million, reflecting the higher orders at the last year end but the market remained very competitive during the period.

Carlton invests \$28.5m in Getty media enterprise

BY ERIC REGULY

July at \$10 a share and is controlled by Getty Investments, a holding company for the Getty family trust.

Carlton bought 3.74 million new Getty shares at \$15.25 apiece and intends to double its Getty ownership to 20 per cent within two years.

Jonathan Klein, Getty's chief executive, said that the Carlton funds will be used to expand the company's library of visual material, ranging

from archival film footage to photojournalism collections. Getty Communications has three divisions. Tony Stone Images specialises in contemporary stock photography. Hulon Getty owns the world's largest collection of archival photography, dating from the 1840s; and Fabulous Footage provides contemporary film footage.

In the nine months to the end of September, the company reported sales of \$63.5 million, up 41 per cent.

Carlton Communications, the largest ITV company, and the billionaire Getty family became partners yesterday when Carlton agreed to invest \$28.5 million in one of the family's media companies.

The investment will give Carlton 10 per cent of Getty Communications, an international group that provides stock pictures and film footage to advertisers, design agencies, magazines, newspapers and broadcasters. It floated on America's Nasdaq market in

Guardian Insurance to cut jobs

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

GUARDIAN INSURANCE is to shed 350 jobs in a major restructuring exercise following its acquisition of Legal & General's commercial insurance operation in July.

The proposed staffing reduction was immediately condemned by the Banking Insurance and Finance Union (Bifu), which described it as "arbitrary cuts to please analysts and the stock market".

Guardian Insurance, the UK general insurance division of Guardian Royal Exchange, said it was restructuring its area and branch network.

It will close one office in each of seven towns where there is currently both a Guardian and a Legal & General office, plus offices in five other locations. The restructuring is expected to be complete by summer 1997.

Geoff Luton, Bifu's chief negotiator with Guardian, said: "A tenth of all jobs will go. It is just change for change's sake - it will not help customer service."

"Our suspicion is that the announcement of year-end job cuts is to meet an executive's performance target rather than to help the business run."

Cost of homes to 'rise 20%'

BY ANNE ASHWORTH

THE cost of buying a home will rise 20 per cent by the end of 1997, according to the TSB Housing Affordability Index.

Out of every £100 they earn, typical buyers will spend £30.70 on their mortgages, against £25.60 today, bringing to an end three years of steadily improving affordability.

In 1996 average affordability fell 10 per cent and was at its best since 1978. House purchase was at its most expensive in 1991, when buyers were forced to pay £71.30 of every £100 earned.

The rise in the new year will be the result of higher mortgage rates and stronger house prices. According to the TSB, the figures take into account the potential impact of a Labour election victory on rates, prices and earnings.

In 1996 prices in some areas, such as London, have risen by as much as 10.1 per cent, and by an average of 7 per cent nationwide. Next year the Halifax Building Society predicts that prices will climb a further 7 per cent.

Some economists believe the figure could be closer to 10 per cent. The TSB anticipates that mortgage payments will rise by 25 per cent, with rates hitting 8.25 per cent.

Buch bounces back with £1m BBB stake

NEVILLE BUCH, the former executive chairman of Blenheim, is making a quick return to the City after taking a £1 million stake in BBB Design, a small design and marketing company. Mr Buch pocketed more than £25 million two months ago when his exhibition business was taken over by United News & Media for £600 million.

His arrival as a director of BBB - he will become chairman in February - lifted BBB's shares from 30p to 46½p. Mr Buch, and family trusts and companies associated with him, will increase their holding of BBB shares from 5.7 per cent to 29.6 per cent by the beginning of next week. Philip O'Donnell will remain as BBB's chief executive, but with a reduced stake of 39.6 per cent. In a separate announcement, United News & Media said that Staffan Svanby will be leaving his job as Blenheim's group managing director. Mr Svanby was credited with steering Blenheim's recovery, and at the time of the takeover was expected to stay on.

NATWEST and American Express have signed a strategic alliance and pledge to rewrite the rules of the credit card industry. NatWest, which has 10 million UK cardholders, will be able to issue cards on Amex's network of 5 million merchants worldwide. Tony Surridge, head of co-branding at NatWest UK, said the first product, a personal credit card, would be launched next summer. The two companies also unveiled a US corporate card, badged under United Airlines.

BRITISH LAND, the property group, boosted confidence in the sector when it reported better than expected half-year profits of £34.2 million, an 81 per cent improvement. Earnings per share rose to 5.4p (2.5p) while the dividend was lifted 5 per cent to 2.92p. John Riblat, the British Land chairman who last week announced a £175 million joint venture with Tesco, said the group is currently financing or planning extensions to 18 of its food superstores, mainly Sainsbury sites. *Tempos, page 26*

JOB THREAT AT BARCLAYS
MORE THAN 600 jobs at Barclays' office in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, could go after the bank's decision to sell its institutional global custody business to Morgan Stanley yesterday for an undisclosed sum. The acquisition of Barclays Global Securities Services will give Morgan Stanley administration of another \$250 billion of assets, taking its total to \$390 billion and putting Morgan Stanley in the top 10 of global custodians for the first time.

CHUBB SHARES SLIP
SHARES of Chubb slipped 9½p to 32½p after the security company reported profits at the bottom end of City forecasts and gave warning that recent acquisitions will dilute earnings by about £3 million in the 1996-97 year. Chubb reported pre-tax profits of £46.1 million, up 3.9 per cent, in the half year to October 11, on turnover 12.5 per cent up to £427.4 million. Earnings per share were 9.9p against 9.6p. An interim dividend of 2.86p, up 10 per cent, is payable on February 14.

BAN HITS HOZELOCK
SUMMER hosepipe bans held back growth at Hozelock, the garden equipment company, which turned in flat sales for the year to September 28. The company said that action taken by authorities in Yorkshire and the North West prompted a 17 per cent decline in the UK market, which left its pre-tax profits only 6 per cent ahead at £9.8 million. Overseas sales fared better. Earnings were 27.2p per share (25.8p). A final dividend of 7.9p, due February 14, takes the total to 11p (8.7p).

CELLTECH TRANSFORMED
CELLTECH, the biotechnology company, said the launch of its two most advanced products in 1998 will help to transform it into a profitable pharmaceuticals group. The products, septic shock treatments developed with Bayer, will be submitted for worldwide registration next year. Celltech reported operating losses of £10.6 million in the year to September 30 against a £7.1 million loss. The £50 million sale of its manufacturing arm raised pre-tax profits to £3 million (£5.4 million loss).

NURSING HOME DEAL
NURSING HOME PROPERTIES, an investment company that specialises in the purchase and leaseback of nursing homes, yesterday bought 12 nursing homes with 557 beds for about £17.8 million. The acquisition brings in Trinity Care and Puretrust as tenants, raising the total number of tenants to ten, and the number of beds to more than 2,500, up from less than 2,000 in September. Nursing Home shares closed unchanged at 117½p.

TEXAS SETTLEMENT NEAR
J SAINSBURY hopes to resolve its long-running dispute with Ladbroke over the price of Texas Homecare by early in the new year. Sainsbury paid £290 million for Texas in January 1995 but agreement on the final price has been held up by a disagreement over net assets. The amount at the centre of the row is about £60 million. Its resolution has also been delayed because the auditors, Price Waterhouse, have been reporting on the problems at Wickes, the fellow DIY retailer.

THOMSON PLAN IMMINENT
THE French Government is to unveil new terms for the privatisation of Thomson, the electronics group whose sale was suspended last week. Reuters reported that official sources said the Government intended to announce new terms before the end of the week. The sale to Lagardere, the Government's preferred bidder, fell apart when the Privatisation Commission objected to the sale of the loss-making Thomson Multimedia arm to Daewoo Electronics, the Korean group.

Former Barings executive settles with SFA

Walz gets City clearance

BY LINDSAY COOK

MARY WALZ, one of the Barings executives responsible for supervising Nick Leeson, the rogue trader, will be able to work again in the City after the Securities and Futures Authority agreed not to proceed with charges against her.

Ms Walz is understood to have agreed to pay part of the regulator's costs and given some acknowledgment of her responsibility for the actions of Leeson, who ran up losses of £830 million and brought about the collapse of Barings.

As the former global head of equity financial products, Ms Walz worked for Ron Baker, the former head of derivatives, who last month escaped a ban from working in the City again. Mr Baker had taken the regulator to a tribunal at which he was reprimanded and ordered to pay costs of £7,500.

Ms Walz, who last week heard that she had lost her claim for a £500,000 bonus promised by Barings hours before its collapse, had planned to take her case to a tribunal but that will now take place.

The formal statement from the SFA does not detail what contribution Ms Walz has agreed to pay to the costs of investigating the case against her. It says: "The disciplinary proceedings brought by SFA against Mary Walz on 15 March 1996 have been settled. The SFA and Ms Walz have agreed not to comment on the terms of the settlement."

Ms Walz can now apply to work again in the City but would need to apply to rejoin the SFA register and would be vetted in the normal way by the regulator.

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Costai
US Co

SIEMENS
NIXDORF

Siemens Nixdorf
notebooks

□ Northern's devotion to shareholder value deserves backing □ Freemans frequent-flyer flutter □ Saints alive to big time

Shining in the bright lights

□ CITY greed, political meddling and erratic regulation are fast converting Britain's utilities from the steady, wholesome, provincial life to a roller-coaster metropolitan lifestyle of high excitement and even higher risk.

In Northern Electric's case, City temptations started things off. In order to fend off a hostile takeover bid from Trafalgar House — and what a lucky escape that was — Northern conducted what seemed a scorched earth defence. It promised to hand over so much cash and near-cash to its shareholders, while hocking its business to the hill, that the wider world realised regional electricity companies were rolling in it. From this Labour's utility levy was born to unlikely respectability.

On the supposed scorched earth, Northern has cultivated another fertile orchard of fruit to offer its shareholders in an attempt to persuade them to stick with the board, rather than accept a second unwanted bid from an equally unattractive source. This one has come from CE Electric, an unprepossessing consortium led by CalEnergy.

A 17 per cent hike in dividend proffered for next year would give Northern shares a prospective yield of 10.2 per cent at

yesterday's prices, and 9.6 per cent at CE's increased offer of 650p per share. Such returns imply extremely high risks. Apart from the unknown levy, there is domestic competition, further price control and highly-gearred normal risks of trade.

However, these risks would surely not justify such a lowly rating if the City did not take an even more short-term view. The consortium is in pole position with nearly a third of Northern's equity on side. Given the Government's sudden, belated aversion to utility bids ahead of the election, traders are being ultra-cautious, waiting to see if the President of the Board of Trade refers the affair to the monopolies authorities by Monday.

That combination undermines Northern's argument that it is undervalued. Yet the company has a strong call on the support of its shareholders. Few have been so dedicated to delivering value to investors. The board has kept its promises and justified the financial risks it took. The

proposed joint venture with another REC such as London Electricity, though not in the bag, shows there is still scope to cut costs. Northern's approach to new markets opened by competition is as bright as any.

That gives some confidence that the board will continue to pull out plums, not least to sustain real dividend growth after the next review of its regulated business. If shareholders spurn such assiduity, many more boards will surely opt for the quiet life.

Home shopping lottery

□ RUN FOR your life! Like a rampaging monster from some Fifties sci-fi epic, the National Lottery is taking over the nation. Soon you won't be able to open the larder without a lottery voucher fluttering out. And any day now, that quiet woman from down the road will be hammering on the front door, eager to



flog you knickers, skirts and everything else in the bulging Freemans catalogue.

Not inertia selling, you understand, but a customer incentive scheme — a frequent-flyer programme for home shoppers. That is how Oflot, the lottery regulator, describes Camelot's latest tie-up in which one million Freemans agents stand to get their hands on dozens of free lottery vouchers. Freemans flyers branded with the Camelot logo will come whizzing through letter boxes in the new year in their thousands, but this is not inertia selling. No one is forcing anyone to swap their vouchers

for lottery tickets. They can always take their £1 commission instead.

Freemans, which follows McCain Foods in signing up as Camelot's second official partner (another eight may follow), is nevertheless out to milk the connection for all it is worth. Its flyer to agents leaves one in no doubt, starting: "What would you do if you won the National Lottery? Buy a diamond ring. Or maybe a sports car. Go on a world cruise, perhaps. Or even buy your own tropical island."

All a far cry from traipsing round the estate with a Freemans catalogue tucked under your arm.

And what of Camelot? Its merchandising arm, National Lottery Enterprises, has been a low-key affair so far, contributing less than £300,000 to Good Causes in the year to end-March, but all that could be about to change. A clutch of lucrative marketing agreements could be just what Camelot needs to shore up its profits. It keeps 50 per cent

of the money paid over in marketing fees, and takes the usual cut of extra ticket sales — potentially millions, in the case of Freemans alone.

Everyone can smell a winner, and Camelot's would-be partners are no exception. But where will it end? Packets of biscuits? Soft drinks? Oven chips and mail-order nighties are just the beginning.

Unlikely partners

□ A SOUTHAMPTON fan could not resist quipping yesterday that the club's merger with a retirement home business made perfect sense given the age of some of the team's players. But at least Southampton's unusual choice of a route to the market will introduce the phrase "reverse takeover" to the increasingly financially literate terraces.

Football fans are quickly learning that it is a game of two halves — with only one half

relating to activity on the pitch. When Southampton and Sunderland join the market in the next few weeks there will be a total of 10 quoted clubs with a combined market capitalisation of £850 million. The arrival of Aston Villa, Newcastle United and Sheffield United shortly will take the total above the £1 billion mark, even though Deloitte Touche calculates that the turnover for the whole game in 1994-95 — the last year for which accounts are available — was only £470 million.

As Keith Wiseman, vice-chairman of Southampton and chairman of the Football Association, says, flotation is becoming a way for the medium-sized clubs to stay in the same game as the big six. Southampton and Sunderland share a similar sized fan base, modest historical success and perilous current positions in the Premiership. But while Southampton has chosen to come to the market valued at £10.1 million — less than those Endsleigh League giants Millwall and Preston North End — Sunderland's float values the club at £48 million. One set of red-and-white fans is destined to be mightily disappointed by their club's arrival in the financial big time.

Costain chiefs to go as US Coal deal is sealed

BY OLIVER AUGUST

COSTAIN, the embattled construction company, is clearing the decks with the departure of the chairman and the chief executive after the sale of its US Coal business to Rencoal of America for £28 million.

Alan Lovell, the chief executive, will resign as soon as a successor has been found in a surprise move that follows months of personal attacks on Mr Lovell for his handling of Costain's financial problems.

He said: "It is the right time for me to leave, now that the restructuring is completed. In an ideal world a construction company should be run by an engineer. I am a mere accountant."

Mr Lovell said that one of

the company's largest shareholders, the Kharafi investors from the Middle East, had not been very supportive towards him. He expects the search for a successor to last between four and six months.

Sir Christopher Benson, the chairman, will also leave the company, to be replaced on January 1 by Dr Azman Firdaus bin Shafii, a member of the Intra group, which rescued Costain from financial difficulties last summer.

Dr Azman, a joint deputy chairman, came face to face with shareholders at the last extraordinary meeting three months ago, where he was prevented from giving a presentation by protesters against

the Newbury bypass, which Costain is building.

Mr Lovell said of Dr Azman: "He is a very impressive individual. Sir Christopher had said in July that he would step down by next May."

Dr Azman's appointment shows the total commitment Intra brings to Costain.

The disposal of US Coal had been expected since last July when Lonrho scuppered a deal at the last minute. The deal with Rencoal includes £8 million of capitalised finance lease obligations. Rencoal is a private group with metal, manufacturing and trading interests in America.

Mr Lovell said Rencoal will assume certain long-term li-

abilities. "This is less cash than the Lonrho deal but it is also a different sort of deal. We had been looking to sell the business for a few years. It is a high risk area and not suitable for us."

Costain now says it expects additional losses of £11 million from US Coal, as well as £4 million extra losses from three projects in the Middle East which were managed badly or underbid.

Costain is also selling its one-third interest in the Spitalfields development site to Metacorp, a Malaysian public company, which is 23 per cent owned by Intra, which itself has a 40 per cent stake in Costain.

Compass will be plotting steady course

COMPASS GROUP, the catering company, is to embark on a period of organic growth and consolidation following its recent acquisition spree (Alasdair Murray writes).

Francis Mackay, chief executive, said the company, which spent £590 million to acquire Ernest International, would continue to look for suitable bolt-on acquisitions but was not intending to make any major purchases this year.

Compass yesterday unveiled a 56 per cent increase in full-year profits, before tax and exceptional items, to £114 million. The total dividend was increased 13 per cent to 8.6p. A final dividend of 5.85p is payable on March 27.

Tempus, page 26

RJB shares fall 23% on circular

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

SHARES in RJB Mining, Britain's largest coal producer, plunged yesterday after a sharp profits downgrade from the company's own broker.

BZW provided the financial backing for RJB's purchase of the English and Welsh collieries and its revised figures sent shock waves through the stockmarket.

RJB saw 23 per cent wiped from its market value after BZW knocked next year's forecast from £196 million to £185.3 million and predicted much lower figures for the following year, reducing its 1997 forecast from £232 million to £192 million.

Earnings per share forecasts for 1997 and 1998 were cut by 19 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. The share

price fell from 485p to 372.5p. The company also faces the threat of strike action with the National Union of Mineworkers midway through a ballot on industrial action.

BZW lowered its profits forecasts because of the increased threat of cheap coal imports and because of output problems at Ashfordley. Coal imports, in common with other imported goods, have become cheaper through the increased strength in sterling.

RJB has contracts with the main generators for coal sales which run until 1998. But it has to compete with cheaper imports of coal for other sales to electricity generators and to users of industrial coal.

Tempus, page 26

Yorkshire lights up interim

YORKSHIRE Electricity has lifted its dividend 33 per cent, spending £25.1 million on half-year payments to its shareholders (Christine Buckley writes).

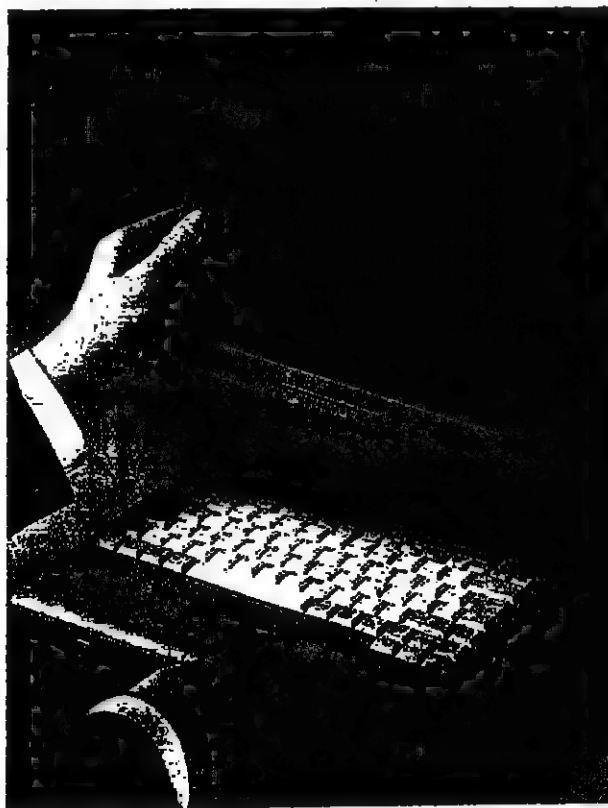
The interim, payable on March 25, was set at 15.8p.

Yorkshire had signalled its move earlier this year amid analysts' predictions that cash would be handed back to utilities shareholders to bleed funds before a Labour Government's windfall tax. But Malcolm Chatwin, chief executive, denied that was the intention.

Pre-tax profits for the six months to the end of September fell 27 per cent to £80.8 million as the last distribution price review bit.

Tempus, page 26

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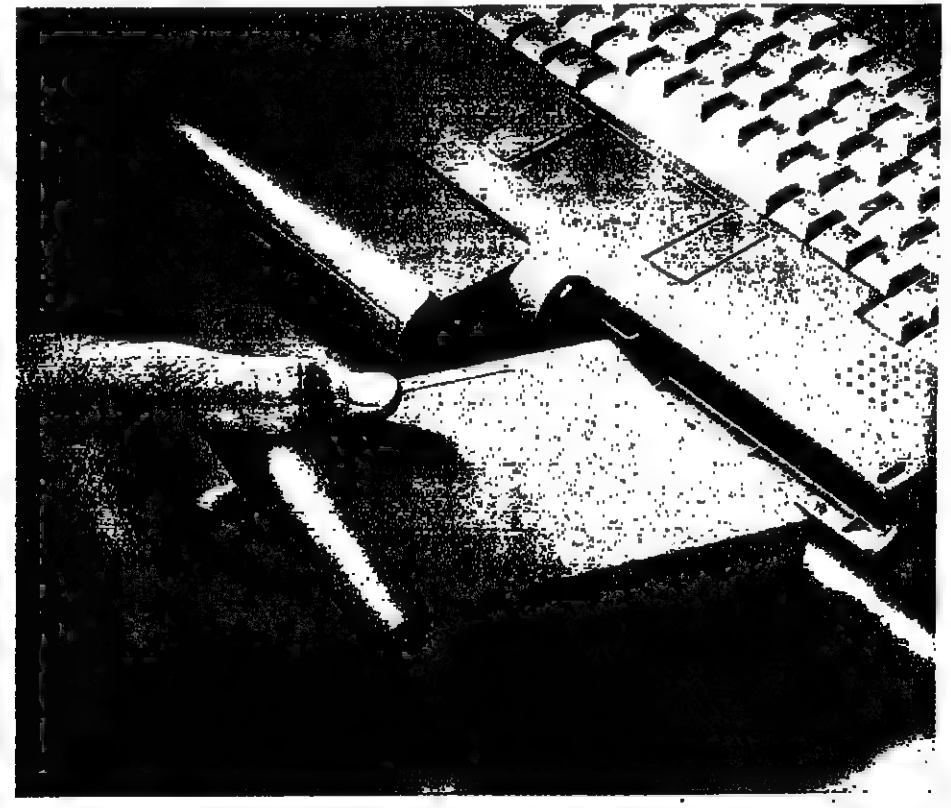


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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Back on the milk round

SOUNDS of ministerial back-scratching from Unigate, which yesterday appointed the Rt Hon John MacGregor as new executive director. The Conservative MP for Norfolk South first met Ian Martin, Unigate's chairman, and Ross Buckland, chief executive, during his time as Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food from 1987-89.

Unigate makes whipped cream of the suggestion that MacGregor's position on the board of Associated British Foods will lead to conflict. An ardent conjurer, and member of the Magic Circle, who knows what tricks MacGregor has up his sleeve.

Sinking feeling

CHRIS HARRISON chose a fitting venue for yesterday's creditor's meeting of Fada in Leeds. There to discuss future plans for the collapsed retailing group, the director was centre stage of the Ark Royal Suite in the plush Queen's Hotel. Just visible over Harrison's right shoulder was a telling headline from *The Yorkshire Evening Post*: "The Day the Ark Royal Sank".

Lord somewhere

A CHRISTMAS gift for the hardworking City type with aristocratic pretensions... Viscount Mountgarret, former president of Yorkshire Cricket Club, expects to make between £5,000 and £7,000 today from the sale at Stationers' Hall of the ancient title of the Lord of the Manor of Stanbury, Mountgarret, best known for shooting at a hot-air balloon flying over his grouse moor in the 1980s, is coy about his reasons for selling the title, which came into his family through marriage in 1894. "Why do you buy an ice cream? How long is a piece of string?" was his quick retort when asked why, adding that he didn't even know where the village was.



"Never mind their score what's the share price?"

Blossoming out

A RATHER risqué invitation from Medical Insurance Agency to the launch of its new dental plan: a picture of Marilyn Monroe, whose outfit reveals a bite more than her pearly white teeth. The inspiration? Marilyn Orcharton, the new general manager of Medical Insurance Agency's Clinident Division, founder of Denplan, which she went on to sell for £1 million. Orcharton boasts that constantly being called Marilyn Monroe as a child turned her into a wallflower. How things have changed.

Canary duo

KNIGHT FRANK and Richard Ellis will take over from Jones Lang Wootton, whose contract expires at the end of this year, as joint agents, responsible for leasing office space at Canary Wharf. About 80 per cent of the 4.5 million sq ft completed is let, with a population of 15,000 rising to 19,000 during 1997 when BZW and Reader's Digest Association relocate to Europe's largest office tower.

MORAG PRESTON

Phoenix's 'baaad man' ready to fight for his resurrection

Craig Lord meets Charles Keating Jr, anti-hero of the 1980s US savings and loans scandal

Like the city that Charles Keating Jr helped to develop from the unforgiving Sonoran desert of Arizona, the fortunes of the former multimillionaire are rising phoenix-like from the ashes of his criminal convictions as one of the biggest financial fraudsters in history. After four-and-a-half years in US state and federal prisons, the feisty 73-year-old, who counts Mother Teresa among his friends but was said to have robbed elderly investors of their life savings to fund failing businesses and an ostentatious lifestyle, professes himself fit for the fight that is set to follow the quashing last week of his federal convictions on more than 70 counts of racketeering and fraud.

He will need to be fit. For in a land where public perception is as good as nine-tenths of the law, a threatened reversal of his conviction with a task of reversing his reputation as anti-hero of the US savings and loans crisis of the 1980s that will eventually cost American taxpayers \$500 billion plus interest (Keating's share is put at \$3 billion).

Keating's earlier state conviction was quashed in April on the grounds that Judge Lance Ito, of O. J. Simpson fame, had given the jury "flawed instructions". The federal convictions fell because 14 of the 18 jurors knew or learnt details of the state case and conviction—in effect, they were deliberating on a man who had already been found guilty of the same charges.

In spite of that, Keating, who paid five senators handsomely in an effort to prevent the re-regulation of the thrift industry, remains a villain in the eyes of many, particularly bondholders of the collapsed American Continental Corporation (ACC), of which he was chairman and chief executive, and its subsidiary Lincoln Savings & Loans. Mention Keating to almost anyone in Phoenix and the reaction is the same: "He's a baaad man." But is he not now a free man? "Yep," shrugged the shopkeeper at the resplendent Phoenix Hotel and Golf Resort that Keating built and owned until his assets were seized in 1989, "but it just goes to show that money can buy you anything in this country."

That "uninformed" opinion, said Keating in an interview with *The Times* in which he broke a five-year media silence, is something that may be impossible to reverse. "Everybody hates rich people." A somewhat surreal assertion from a pensioner who claims to be all but broke and whose manner is far from that of an arrogant corporate despot.

But then Keating was recalling wealthier times when he would think nothing of flying his extended family to Europe to choose a chef for the Phoenix, lend his private jet to a generous donor, and when his Catholic creed was held alongside a more combative corporate one—"a man can do no wrong if he always rides to the sound of the guns" stated the bronze plaque in his office.

Keating was convicted of looting the federally-insured deposits of Lincoln by booking false profits on sham land and securities transactions, many of those involving the issue of "risky" junk bonds, while fooling auditors and investors about the failing health of Lincoln and ACC. In the midst of the crisis ACC bonds were issued through Lincoln branches to help with cashflow problems caused by a fall in real estate prices and exacerbated by the costs, running to more than \$86 million, of the 13-month investigation into Lincoln.

Keating says the use of the word 'risky' is ridiculous. Sweeping his hands



Charles Keating Jr. top, and Judge Lance Ito who conducted his trial

towards the grid network of comfortable homes trimmed with evergreen lawns across Phoenix, he says: "As a large housing contractor we were very successful, and housing has now been very profitable. If you don't take some risks then you won't make money." He cites the Phoenixian, which grossed more than \$110 million this year.

There was also the 20 per cent share of Sir James Goldsmith's GOIL (Gen-



Mother Teresa and Sir James Goldsmith figured in the financier's past

eral Oriental Investments Limited). One of the assets was in Newmont Mining. "We had 20 per cent of Jimmy's 50 per cent in Newmont Mining and Newmont Gold," said Keating. He cites a Phoenix land inventory worth \$800 million in April 1989 before federal seizure. "That land has gone through the ceiling and junk bonds are gold," he says.

Without necessarily agreeing with his claim to innocence, thrift industry sources confirm some of what he says and have long questioned the role of regulators in the thrift crisis and their handling of Lincoln. Of the 75 people targeted for investigation, none beyond Keating was indicted. "As such, we hadn't a hope of having any one of those 74 testify for us," says Keating.

His supporters say that they have been witnesses to a persecution. Judge John Davies, who was an Olympic swimming champion for Australia in 1956, granted Keating bail from prison in October for his case to be heard at appeal. Keating was a swimmer himself and his son, Charles Keating III, or C3 (whose lesser conviction over Lincoln has also been quashed), finished fifth in Britain's David Wilkie in the 200 metres breast stroke at the 1976 Olympic Games. Keating's son-in-law, Gary Hall, was runner-up to Mark Spitz in 1972, and his grandson, also Gary Hall, won medals at Atlanta.

Keating used ACC to buy Lincoln in 1984 when the Reagan administration brought in the Garn-St Germain Act to free up investment laws to stimulate a thrift industry that was already incurring losses. Lincoln incurred a \$4m loss in 1984 but after Keating stepped in, showed profits of \$79 million in 1985 and \$41 million in 1987.

The Federal Home Loans Bank Board, the regulatory body for thrifts, has been accused by the accountant, John Atchison, a former partner in Arthur Young and director of ACC, of operating "far outside the boundaries of their knowledge", while the Bush administration is said to have been re-regulating the industry even as bids for newly deregulated S&Ls were being processed. Keating says: "They changed the rules and then regretted their decision. Meanwhile I put a lot of money into Lincoln."

That he appears to have been a scapegoat is backed up, in part, by the testimony to the Senate Banking Committee of Rosemary Stewart, the chief enforcement lawyer for the regulator. She alleged there had been leaks and "a vendetta attitude by members of our agency with respect to Lincoln... never in my 15 years of service had I observed a similar situation of such indiscretion".

The theory is supported by the fact that this case was not treated as a white-collar crime. Keating was described by prosecutors as a trophy prisoner and incarcerated alongside "drug barons and IRA terrorists convicted of attempting to export weapons to Britain—some real rough cookies".

It was certainly not the kind of world Keating was used to. He donated millions of dollars every year, mainly to Catholic causes for the sick and homeless, and was a fearsome anti-pornography campaigner. He also sponsored thousands of children from New York ghettos through the De La Salle Academy, and two vast swimming programmes that gave scholarships to hundreds of talented but impoverished youngsters.

While Keating appears to harbour no grudge, he is clearly angry that assets were sold by liquidators at "bargain-basement" prices. For example, Kuwaiti investors were said to have bought the Phoenixian for about 25 per cent of its true market value. "They just came along and took everything I had," said the man who paid for his college education and graduation as an attorney by cleaning sewers at night. "But I'm gonna try and do it all over again."

Whether there will be another trial will be decided in court on January 16. FBI investigators have already begun the task of rounding up prosecution witnesses from the first trial. Stephen Neal, Keating's lawyer, is confident of a different result. He intends to call defence witnesses who would not come forward at the first trial because the judge refused to grant immunity, even though prosecution witnesses such as Judy Wischer, former president of ACC, testified under a plea agreement and so avoided prison.

Keating is sanguine. "I hope there isn't another trial and I don't expect one. But I'll face whatever comes. You gotta be somewhere."

Eric Reguly on how Channel 5 brought March launch into focus

Interference has almost cleared

This time it is for real. David Elstein, the chief executive of Channel 5, is promising that Britain's newest, and last, terrestrial broadcaster will make its debut on March 30.

Advertisers and potential viewers can be forgiven for any scepticism. Earlier this year, Channel 5's shareholders—Pearson and United News & Media, both of Britain, Warburg Pincus of America and CLT of Luxembourg—said that the channel would launch by the end of this month.

When Mr Elstein, 52, the former head of programming for BSkyB, landed at Channel 5 in September, he said February was the better bet. Only an act of God, he said, will delay the launch past March.

Mr Elstein is confident because the effort to return millions of TVs and video recorders so they can receive the channel without interference, one of the biggest civil engineering exercises in history, finally seems under control. An army of 5,000 returners,

each of them rigorously checked for everything from bad manners to criminal records, has been mobilised and roughly four million of the 14 million homes in the channel's broadcasting area have been returned. The pace—about 400,000 homes a week at the moment—will pick up in January, when another 2,000 returners are to be recruited.

Channel 5 expects to finish retuning by late February or early March, giving it several weeks to rid the system of transmission glitches before regular broadcasts begin.

A change in strategy has allowed the returners to work more efficiently. Some bright engineers discovered that many homes in the channel's broadcast areas are immune to interference. To determine which ones, they simply conduct a test transmission and wait for the switchboard to light up with calls from complainers. The returners visit the homes with interference problems and the rest are ignored. "We learned that we had

been retuning far too many homes," said Mr Elstein. "By making appointments and retuning only the homes that need it, we are increasing our safety margin."

The retuning blitz has not come cheaply. Channel 5's owners initially expected to spend about £60 million on retuning.

Virtually all of the programming is in place for the first year—all it needs now is viewers

Some bidders for the Channel 5 franchise, including BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster 40 per cent owned by News International, publisher of *The Times*, believed the figure to be laughably low. Pearson later admitted that the bill would climb to about £100 million. The latest estimate is about £150 million. The higher figure partly re-

fects the extra homes in the channel's broadcast area. The number went from ten million to 14 million in September, when the Government awarded Channel 5 an extra broadcast frequency. The shareholders expect to recoup the extra retuning costs by delivering a larger audience to advertisers. But they still expect the channel to break even sometime in 1999.

With the retuning largely under control, Mr Elstein is spending more time on ensuring that the programming schedule is in place. In October he signed a \$10 million deal with Columbia TriStar, the Hollywood studio, for 144 releases, ranging from TV film premieres to mini-series.

Two weeks ago, it signed another deal with 20th Century Fox, the studio owned by The News Corporation. The price was not disclosed, but it is thought to have been about \$40 million. In exchange, Channel 5 received the British terrestrial rights to the studio's recent box office hits, including *Independence Day*, *Mrs Doubtfire*

and *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*. Those contracts alone appear to have eaten up almost half of Channel 5's relatively tiny £110 million programming budget, but more money has magically appeared. Mr Elstein entered the bidding for *ER* and *Friends*, the enormously popular Warner Bros programmes, when the British rights, held by Channel 4, came up for renewal. Channel 5, in partnership with BSkyB, is thought to have bid \$90 million or so but was trumped by a \$100 million offer from Channel 4.

Mr Elstein said the shareholders would have stamped up the funds because of the advertising revenue the programmes could have generated. Nevertheless, virtually all of Channel 5's programming is in place for the first year. All it needs now is viewers. Mr Elstein thinks the market's forecast of a market share between 5 and 7 per cent is realistic. He said: "This will not be a crisis Christmas for me. I think we're in good shape."



ANTHONY HARRIS

Why Greenspan's pension warning includes you

Despite his awe-inspiring success, there are still some Americans, and even some on Wall Street, who are sceptical about Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan. Is he the wisest of central bankers, or just the luckiest? Or to put it more directly, does even he know how he does it? The doubters, led by the surviving monetarists, had their worst fears confirmed a couple of weeks ago when the Fed went public on the equations which make up its model of the economy. As they suspected all along, the Fed has no views at all about the money supply. A staffer admitted: "There is a money demand equation but it doesn't do anything."

To the believers, this is like the Pope admitting he is an atheist. The Fed runs the money supply, but doesn't believe that the money supply matters, so if it was honest, it ought to shut up shop. To a non-monetarist like myself, of course, the Fed's confession shows just the opposite: that the Fed is wise enough to know that monetary policy matters, but cannot be judged simply on an arbitrary statistic. It requires understanding of a whole range of real and psychological factors, far too complicated to be captured in one simple number. But the case for pragmatism cannot be stated as snappily as the monetarist creed: so as long as the monetarists are around, there will still be bond market vigilantes ready to turn a statistic into a panic.

On one subject, however, Greenspan is not just an expert, but the expert. When it comes to the finances of the US social security system, he quite literally wrote the book—namely the report, some 15 years ago, which led to a sharp rise in social security taxes, and so started the US back on the road to fiscal balance. He said at the time that this "fix", as it was known, would not be adequate in the long run; and that is the only decent excuse I can imagine for the fact that when he said it again last week, only our own Bronwen Maddox in Washington seems to have taken any serious notice.

This message could hardly matter more. It is obviously an advance warning that the US will still need a sharp tax increase, or an equally sharp cut in retirement pay, if it is not to slide back into deficit. Someone's expected income will be cut, and the only question is whose.

Since the same warning needs repeating, only much louder, in almost every EC country the far side of the English Channel, ask not for whom the bell tolls. Indeed it tolls for you if you are a baby-boomer, wherever you live and even if you have no personal interest in any State-finance pension: for the Greenspan warning, even if it does not fully realise it, is the warning bell for the end of the greatest bull run in history.

The reason could hardly be simpler. The US runs what is in theory a funded pension scheme, a fund which accumulates enough (or less than enough) US Treasury bonds to pay future pensions. It is a heavy accumulator at the moment, because of the large number of baby boomers paying in, and the relatively small number of retired. It will swing into large deficit a little more than a decade hence, both because the first of the baby boomers will be retiring, and because the growth of personal incomes in the US had been quite sluggish: those retiring may even be richer than those who have to keep them in fiddles.

What few seem to have noticed, however, is that the providers of private pensions have just the same demographics and just the same cash flow pattern. They are also accumulating assets at a great rate—but mainly in equities, not bonds. Nearly any fund manager, here or there, will confirm that he is at the moment forced to buy equities against his better judgment, by the sheer weight of funds. This has, in fact, been the baby boomers' bull market: but by the time the US Social Security fund is back in deficit, it will be a secular bear market. So if you are riding the bull, remember to dismount in good time.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Global free trade affects not only producers in Third World areas

From Mr Anthony G. Phillips Sir, Anita Roddick (Myth behind the idea of an unfettered local economy, November 21) correctly identifies poor Third World producers as among those who suffer as a result of unfettered global free trade. But virtually everyone in this country suffers too. By importing cheap manufactured goods from the other side of the globe, we have also imported massive unemployment in major industries in this country which are quite capable of making equivalent high quality items. We have such absurdities as yoghurt being trucked here daily from Greece. British

croissants being trucked to Paris, fresh Scottish seafood being hauled down to coastal areas of France etc etc. All this makes a profit (often marginal) for those involved and contributes to GDP, but the hidden costs in terms of congestion, pollution and sheer waste are often ignored.

Yet, as consumers, we can so easily vote with our purses and wallets. Do we really need such a vast choice of consumer goods, and if so, can we not choose those produced in UK, preferably locally? Yours faithfully, ANTHONY G. PHILLIPS, 32 Upper Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

Legislation needed for interest on overpaid tax

From Mr J. Redstone Sir, In his article on the recent VAT judgment of the European Court (Business News November 20) Pennington says that "the Government has a duty to act fairly. It cannot apply one rule to the State and another to the taxpayer". Unfortunately for the latter, this is exactly what the Government does when assessing interest on tax payments. The Revenue charges interest on

all late payments of income tax but does not add interest to the return of overpayments of tax even when, as in our case, the repayments are substantial and almost a year late. The need for the Government to have a legal obligation to be even-handed in such matters is long overdue. Yours faithfully, S.J. REDSTONE, Kilmiscott, Highdown Road, Roehampton, SW15.

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Shares move higher

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996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THE TIMES. WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 11 1996



WIND SO

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

NO. 1





THEATRE 1
Richard Eyre looks back with affection at a decade of success running the National



THEATRE 2
Griff Rhys Jones and other stars light up the gala opening of the refurbished Cambridge Arts

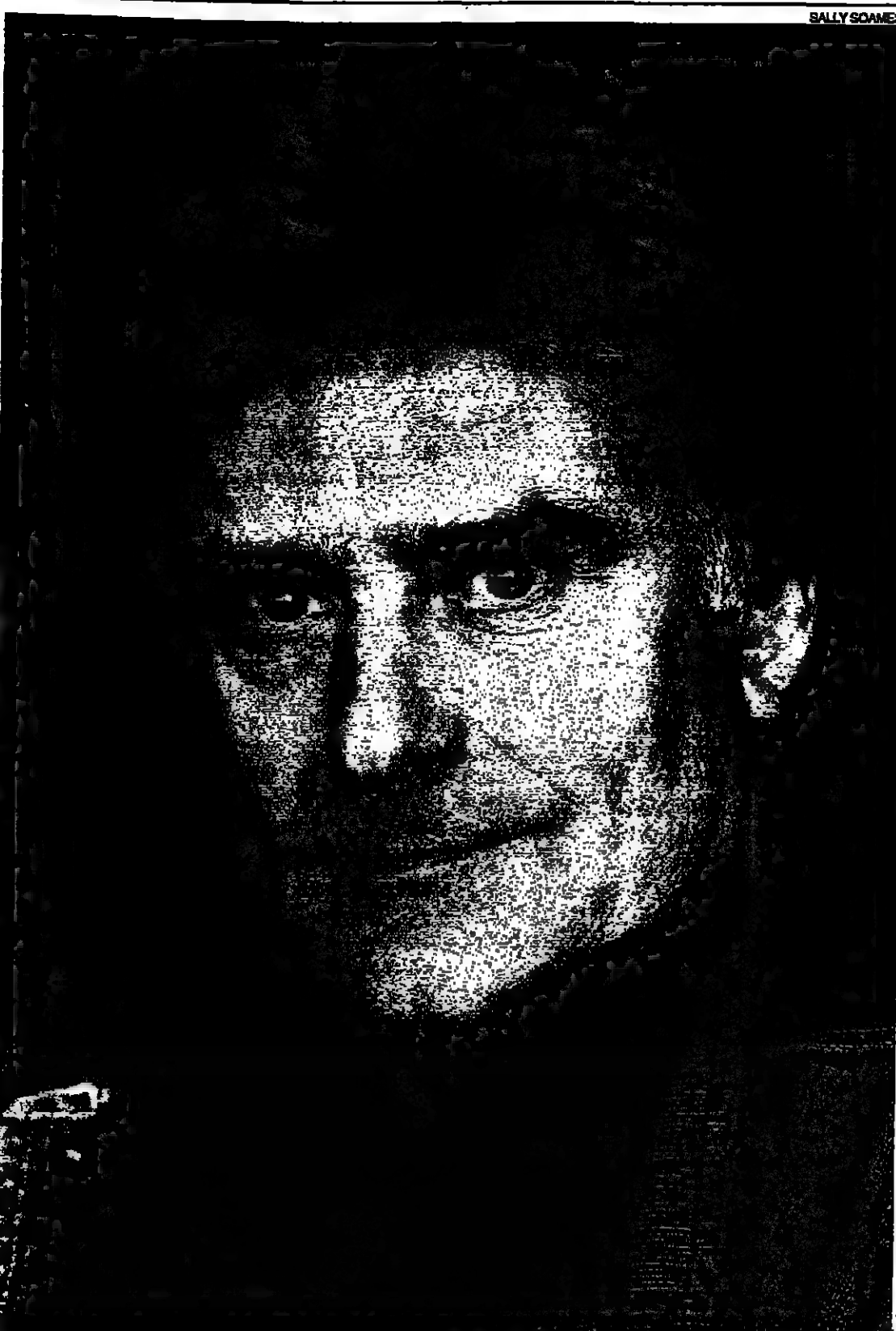
THE TIMES ARTS



RISING STAR
Today, Orkney, tomorrow, the world: folk fiddler Jennifer Wrigley prepares to spread her wings



TOMORROW
Canine capers: reviews of Glenn Close in *101 Dalmatians*, and all the other new movies



Richard Eyre: "I'd rather risk design overkill than imaginative underkill. My feeling is, let's use every device"

The guy who grew up at the National

Benedict Nightingale talks to Richard Eyre about his decade directing the NT

Hang on the wall of Richard Eyre's office at the National Theatre is a framed letter signed "very concerned, Tunbridge Wells", but actually penned by the cartoonist Raymond Briggs. "You must not become a boring civil servant," it says. "IT IS DEATH." And by way of emphasising that Eyre should not, cannot take the theatre's top job, there is a skull and crossbones above the signature. Well, the Eyre who retires as the National's director next September does not look like a corpse, still less a civil servant, nor does he feel that he should have listened to the Cassandra in 1988. He is a bit greyer, as a 53-year-old has a right to be, and a little tired, as he certainly should be after a long rehearsal of the revival of *Gyps and Dolls* that opens on Tuesday. But eight-odd years spent working 12-hour days, producing some 150 plays, directing 20 of them himself, and ensuring he will hand on a solvent, buoyant National to Trevor Nunn, have not dimmed that furrowed, diffident enthusiasm of his.

And his last months at the National will certainly be eventful. He will direct new plays by David Hare (*Amy's View*, next June) and, if it is finished, by Tom Stoppard (about A.E. Housman). He will also stage *King Lear*, with Ian Holm. And he will oversee the temporary conversion of the Olivier into an 800-seat theatre-in-the-round for productions of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Marat/Sade*. If that experiment succeeds it could have far-reaching implications for this dauntingly large theatre.

After that? Well, though Eyre looks forward to some "thinking time", he is also mulling over plans to write books, stage the odd play and make a film of Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend*.

What will he miss most? Not the hustle, not "the racing in order to stand still", but the camaraderie

and, in a way, the power. The first of these regrets will not surprise anybody who has observed Eyre's efforts to ensure that his South Bank "Oz" is more about people and plays than committees and concrete. Working harmoniously with colleagues is "the highest form of human activity, a microcosm of what we try to achieve in a family and a relationship".

But power? Eyre may exude what his predecessor, Peter Hall, called a "sty strength", but he hardly comes across as a British Richelieu. "No, I mean the power to make choices. I've been very spoilt, because I've been able to be my own producer and go where my passions led me. I've never been ambitious for riches or fame or power per se, but I do have an obsessive ambition to produce the best possible work under the best possible conditions."

From another man that might sound pompous; not, somehow, from him. And his record to date, from his own English-fascist *Richard III* to the premiere of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, from Stephen Daldry's revival of *An Inspector Calls* to Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa*, is beyond dispute. Sometimes (*The Bourgeois Gentleman*, *Pericles*) design has got the better of content, but the upside of that has been (Theatre de Complicité's *The Visit*, Robert Lepage's *Midsummer Night's Dream*) an openness to visual daring.

"I'm someone who believes in the primacy of the writer, but I suppose I've made a Faustian pact with what you might pejoratively

call designer theatre. Still, I'd rather risk design overkill than imaginative underkill. If there's been a unifying factor in what we've done it's been a belief in the power of the theatre, by which I mean those characteristics of the theatre that can't be translated into any other medium."

Another criticism of Eyre may be that he has failed to create a distinctive company at the National. But as Hall also found, ensembles are hard to reconcile with the need to weave 15 plays a year in and out of three very different auditoriums. "And I'd argue that we have a de facto ensemble. By next September Judi Dench will have spent five of the last ten years at the National."

Dench, David Hare, Katie Mitchell and many other creative talents have profited from Eyre's National, and he feels he has profited from it, too. The theatre has, he says, forced him to overcome his natural reticence, grow up, and take responsibility for difficult, sometimes unpopular decisions. So why, then, does he want to go? "I've been here for nearly ten years, and that's a decade of my tastes and my choices. Change is good for the organisation, good for the public and good for me. I'd hate to outstay my welcome."

Oddly, he does not remember money, or the lack of it, as being the greatest of his problems. Every June, he says, he told his board there were financial disasters ahead, and every time the theatre muddled through. But his stoicism is tempered by dismay at the effects of the rising seat prices

that have kept the National afloat. "I'm afraid the social base of our audiences is less broad than it was even in the early 1970s, and that troubles me, because art should be available to everyone."

That is one problem Eyre is regretfully handing over to his successor. Another which Trevor Nunn will have to face is that most younger directors are eager to work in the little Conesloe, but find the Lyttelton impersonal and the Olivier's 1,200-seat amphitheatre intimidating. "It's partly a generational thing," says Eyre. "But it's true that the Olivier is a vast volume to fill, and it takes a huge amount of physical and emotional energy to fill it. Without that and a minimum of 700 in the audience, the event doesn't occur."

On the evidence of Eyre's original staging of the show, back in 1982, this will not be a problem with *Gyps and Dolls*. It may not be his last production as National director, but it should be his biggest and most ebullient. The practical reason he is restaging it is that the National needs a Christmas money-spinner, but the more personal one is that he wants to its good-hearted handling of love and reconciliation. "It's one of the English-speaking world's great romantic comedies."

With Henry Goodman and Imelda Staunton replacing Bob Hoskins and Julie Mackenzie as the gamblers and his moll, Eyre hopes for a more edgy, 1990s feel. With the more complete performers who are currently emerging from drama school, he hopes the singing and dancing will be more professional. And then, of course, there are Frank Loesser's songs. "You can't separate the melody from the lyrics or the wit from the feeling. In an ideal world I'd have thought of something new for Christmas, but I couldn't, so I went for something I love."

● *Gyps and Dolls* opens at the Olivier on Dec 17 (0171-928 2252)

With a song and a dance

This evening Robert Lepage's *Elsinore*, a one-man version of a play that normally finds place for a cast of 25, reopens a theatre that has been rebuilt in all directions, ie, upwards, downwards and sideways, which in dramatic terms is pretty much how Lepage treats *Hamlet*.

The Cambridge Arts Theatre was founded by John Maynard Keynes and Dadie Rylands 60 years ago, and its structure was in dire need of being brought up to date. Some of the original planning was undertaken in a haphazard fashion. The orchestra pit was designed for the 39-strong orchestra of Sadler's Wells

and its dimensions determined by chalking circles around the conductor as he simulated the playing of each instrument in King's College Dining Hall.

The doors closed to public performance three years ago and within a few months the interior was a large hole. Now, 13 million later, including one of the earliest National Lottery grants, the hole has become a warm and efficiently air-conditioned auditorium, panelled with cherrywood (from the Ranyevskaya estate, perhaps).

At Sunday's gala opening Barry Brown, architect of the new theatre, sometime president of the Footlights and owner of an impressive rococo

Gala Opening Arts Theatre, Cambridge

walruscoat, explained that the building is just as it was before, except for the roof, which has been topped with three new storeys, oh yes, and the floor, where there are six new basement dressing rooms and the stage is half as big again; and, well, the walls too, with new stairways, new lifts, new foyers, three new bars and four new restaurants. "We've sliced the backs off all the surrounding buildings," he told us gleefully.

Eminent persons from the slightly sliced buildings, heads of colleges, the Vice-Chancellor, and other figures of repute were in the audience to enjoy an evening made up of snatches of four of the five art forms that inspired the theatre's pentagon logo.

A couple of numbers from the ballet *Faust* opened the occasion and then Miriam Margolyes gave one of the

funniest of the sequences in her one-woman show *Dickens' Women*. The woman here was Mrs Corney, gushing and frolicsome, being proposed to by an immensely self-satisfied Mr Bumble.

Then it was time for opera: arias from Mozart, Puccini et al and, since a tenor and a baritone were on hand, a duet to do with pearls and fishers. Choristers from King's College sang settings of Shakespeare, and sixth-formers from local schools hurried us through the Brecht/Weill *Happy End*, though I'd have preferred a couple of complete numbers instead of a frustrating nibble at several.

Finally, it was Griff Rhys Jones, giggling at the absurdity of the song he had chosen, a country and western parody about a cowpoke who, well, poked cows. The occasion was a proper mixture of the light and the heavy, amateur and professional, faithful to the Keynes vision, except that this time no one needed to draw any chalk circles to realise it.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Jolly japes for all

Dick Daredevil Drill Hall, WI

"WE'RE ready for good times in London tonight," sings the chorus, a doughty group of Londoners during the Blitz. Since *Dick Daredevil* is a pastiche of Forties fictions, they must endure a few more frights before they are granted their wish. Romance, radio adventure serials and Broadway musicals provide the raw material for writer Phil Willmott and composer Steven Markwith. This occasion some fairly extraordinary turns of event for the good Londoners. In particular, young Billy Spratt, a devotee of the nightly *Dick Daredevil Adventure Hour* on the wireless. How thrilling for Billy that his hero is transported to Earth to help out with a case of Nazi spying. How frightening that he is removed to the planet Zarg, where he performs some heroics.

More remarkable still, however, is that the show features a cast of 27 accompanied by a four-piece band. The Drill Hall is by no means London's smallest studio space, but it counts as an unaccustomed luxury to have so many people

singing at such close range. Willmott directs neatly and Denise Range's choreography ensures that they fall over each other only at the appropriate moments.

You might expect such a musical to be laced with the ironies of the Nineties, but Willmott's tone is so affectionate that there isn't much to separate *Dick Daredevil* from the forebears it draws upon. This is a show without cynicism, which also means that it recycles virtually all the wartime platitudes.

When the plot warms up the company serves it well. The charms of the piece are embodied by its comic-book adventures.

The publicity claims that the show is suitable for those aged six and upwards. You'd only quibble if you felt such old-fashioned fun was rather resented for youngsters today.

ANDY LAVENDER

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
JENNIFER WRIGLEY

Age: 22

Why is she in the news? Because playing the fiddle has just won her the BBC Radio 2 Young Tradition Award, the top prize for upcoming folk musicians in Britain. And don't forget twin sister Hazel who plays guitar: usually they perform together, but the competition rules only allow solo artists.

Where's home? Orkney, although they now live in Edinburgh. For the next three months the Wrigley girls will be living out of suitcases: part of the prize is a showcase performance at the international Folk Alliance conference in Toronto, but a world tour will also take in the Far East and the US.

What's so special about Orcadian music? "It has a lovely rolling feel. It doesn't go at a hundred miles an hour like Irish music. There are lots of polkas and a Norse influence."

Who are her heroes? "So many great traditional musicians from Scotland, Ireland, America, but if I had to single out one it would be Tom Anderson, a brilliant fiddle player from Shetland who taught me a lot."

Musical genes: The twins started playing at eight. Father plays "a bit", but the real influence was grandfather, "a pretty good Orcadian pianist".

When can we see them? Not until March when they return from conquering the world, but there is a show on Radio 2 in the new year. They begin recording an album in April and will be playing the British folk festivals next summer.

Secret of success: "Being different. Most players with any technical proficiency can copy traditional music. We write tunes based on tradition but with our own personality."



NIGEL WILLIAMSON

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION THE TIMES

WIN ONE OF FOUR PSION AWARD-WINNING PERSONAL ORGANISERS

Continuing our Twelve Days of Christmas competition, *The Times*, brings you the chance to win, not four calling birds, but an award-winning handheld computer that will do everything except baste the turkey.

The Psion 3c, worth £399.95, has been voted the best personal organiser on the market for gadgetry. This is not surprising when you consider what it can do. With its powerful word processor, database and spreadsheet applications, you can create and store documents wherever you are. And you can beam files to compatible printers or other Psion palmtops using the on-board infra-red transmitter.

So, if you are a workaholic swishing down the ski slopes, with this piece of equipment in your pocket (it only weighs 275g), you will not suffer from withdrawal symptoms.

With the Psion 3c you can send faxes,

browse the Internet and e-mail across the globe. You can set an agenda with personal alarms, there is an address database, jotter, voice recorder, day-week planner and a calculator. The software titles include a money management package, Microsoft AutoRoute, a Berlitz programme and games including Monopoly and Scrabble.

HOW TO ENTER

Call 0891 300 361 with the missing word from the following poem:

"It is Christmas Day in the
And the cold bare walls are bright
With garlands of green and holly,
And the place is a pleasant sight
For with clean-washed hands and faces,
In a long and hungry line
The paupers sit at the tables
For this is the hour they dine."

Winners will be chosen at random from all correct entries received by midnight tonight. Normal Times Newspapers Ltd competition rules apply. Calls cost (per minute) 45p cheap rate, 50p at all other times.

CHANGING TIMES



CHOICE 1

Jonathan Miller directs A Midsummer Night's Dream

VENUE: Opens tonight at the Almeida Theatre



CHOICE 2

... while Adrian Noble brings Ibsen's Little Eyolf to the stage

VENUE: Now in preview at the Swan, Stratford

THE TIMES ARTS



CHOICE 3

Gilbert and Sullivan updated: the "Grand Hotel" Mikado returns to the Coliseum for Christmas



MUSIC

Bernard Haitink conducts a polished night of Bruckner, including the stirring Te Deum

LONDON

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA The acclaimed pianist Andrzej Sikorski joins the orchestra under Bernard Haitink for a performance of Mozart's melodic final piano concerto (No. 25). The other half of the programme is Shostakovich's powerful Symphony No. 4. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Royal Albert Hall, 11.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 262 5000.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Jonathan Miller stages his first play in Britain for 10 years. An interesting cast is headed by Norman Rodway and Angela Thorne as the royal innkeepers, with Peter Bayles as Bottom. Set designs by the Quay Brothers. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Almeida Theatre, 11.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 259 4404.

THE MIKADO Jonathan Miller's production of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera returns to the Coliseum. The cast includes Richard Stiles, James Kelly, Bonaventura Botone, and Richard Van Allan. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Coliseum, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 532 5000.

THE PHYSICAL TRIBUTE TO THE BLUES BROTHERS Another West End show for the out songsters by guys in black glasses. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 11.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Matt Hargre

ELSEWHERE

READING The Doris Playhouse/Panorama co-production of *Pollock*. Adrian Hays's play about the artist's life is a one-man show. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Doris Playhouse, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 353 5000.

BIRMINGHAM Daniel Harding conducts the Birmingham Royal Ballet in a programme of works by the 19th-century composer. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Royal Ballet, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0121 232 5000.

LIVERPOOL The Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Paul McGeeth is joined by mezzo-soprano Catherine Wynne-Jones and tenor Anthony Rolfe-Johnson in a programme featuring Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* as well as music by Haydn and Jan Sibelius. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Philharmonie Hall, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0151 708 3789.

STRAATFORD UPON AVON Adrian Noble directs Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* at the Swan. The play is a one-man show. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Swan, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 01793 532 5000.

LONDON GALLERIES

Alan Cristea Colour Etc. (0171-438 1866). **Barbican Cinema** (0171-438 1866). **British Library Galleries** (0171-438 1866). **Camden Arts Centre** (0171-438 1866). **Canary Wharf** (0171-438 1866). **Canary Wharf** (0171-438 1866). **Canary Wharf** (0171-438 1866).

OPERA: Miller's G&S confection returns to ENO; the Domingo nights continue at the Garden

Yum-Yum's chum-chums ... and Placido's friends

Ten years old and still going strong, Jonathan Miller's production of *The Mikado* is back, and very welcome. Performed as if by E.F. Benson returns in a 1930s spa hotel designed by Magritte (in fact, designed by Stefanos Lazaridis). It explores Miller's love-hate relationship with the English middle class — with, as the lady in the song has it, an emphasis on the latter — in daffy, sardonically witty terms.

The vowel sounds are as



The Mikado Coliseum

Jonathan Miller, a lovely Yum-Yum, but Bonaventura Botone (Nanki-Poo) seemed on autopilot

FOR once at curtain call time the bouquets, which came in plenty from all over the house, were reserved for the conductor. Placido Domingo made his Royal Opera debut in *Tosca* 25 years ago almost to the day. After some initial indecision he opted to celebrate the anniversary on the rostrum rather than the stage. It matters not whether Do-

Tosca Covent Garden

mingo is singing Cavaradossi or conducting him, he is still likely to be the star of the show. And so it proved.

The cast remained the one which opened this revival ten days ago, but Monday's performance had improved beyond all measure. Perhaps the three principals had learnt how to work together; perhaps they were determined to put on a gala show for the best Cavaradossi of our time, or perhaps it is simply that Domingo still generates electricity wherever he goes. He played the big dramatic moments for all they were worth: the *Te Deum* at the close of Act I, Tosca's mental and physical battle with Scarpia in Act II. But Domingo generally took a more lyrical view of Puccini than Edward Downes had done before him. The prelude to Act III and the following introduction to *E lucevan le stelle* put magic into the Rome air.

Domingo, nose often well buried in the score, interlarded little with his singing. The freedom was appreciated. Keith Olsen made sounds for his lamentable Cavaradossi on opening night and sounded much more confident. His tenor remains hard, but at least there is some soft singing. Galina Gorchakova now has far more artistic temperament flashing through Tosca's changing moods, although *Vissi d'arte* is not yet her finest hour. James Morris's Scarpia has acquired vocal bite.

Conducting has been cynically described as Domingo's "retirement job". To judge from the acclaim greeting his Siegmund over the weekend he is not in need of one just yet. But when the time comes he will be well able to get the sparks flying around him.

JOHN HIGGINS

THE ADVENTURES OF MICHAEL KATZ The first of a new series of plays by Mark Taper's masterpiece, adapted and directed by Michael Katzev. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Greenwich, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 858 7785.

CASH ON DELIVERY Bradley Walsh in his first leading West End role in farcical comic about a man who is a professional liar. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

A DOLL'S HOUSE No superlatives high enough for Janet McTear's Anthony Page's first-class production of Ibsen's proto-feminist drama. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** National Theatre, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 353 5000.

THE ELVIS PRESLEY Commissioned play from comedian David Schneider in which he plays a single man having himself in all his modern incarnations. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** National Theatre, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 353 5000.

FAMILY CIRCLES Early Ayckbourn. These sisters who change partners for each new scene, showing that marriage can be hazardous, whoever will choose. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Orange Tree, Clarendon Street, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 262 5000.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

Home Hill returns only to the West End. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

THE LAST OF THE MOON KINGS (18). Pleasant coming-of-age saga set in 19th-century London. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

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NEW RELEASES

A CHINESE GHOST STORY Delirious mix of martial arts, horror, comedy and ghostly action. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

THE DAY OF THE BEAST (18). Premise: to avert the end of the world, Satan's army must be destroyed. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

FEELING MINNESOTA (18). Unpleasant drama about two women who are enemies. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS (18). Unpleasant drama about a dysfunctional family. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

CINEMA GUIDE

David Brown's assessment of films in London and where to see them

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ART GALLERIES

PARKIN GALLERY 200-202, 100-102, 100-102, 100-102. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

WE ARE BACK FROM RUSSIA 100-102, 100-102, 100-102, 100-102. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

ROYAL BALLET 100-102, 100-102, 100-102, 100-102. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

COLISEUM 100-102, 100-102, 100-102, 100-102. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

ROYAL BALLET 100-102, 100-102, 100-102, 100-102. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

THEATRES

ALBERT THEATRE 100-102, 100-102, 100-102, 100-102. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

THE CHERRY ORCHARD 100-102, 100-102, 100-102, 100-102. **Admission:** £10-25. **VENUE:** Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30pm. **Box Office:** 0171 494 5070.

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FILM

The Trekkers come out to welcome the latest cinematic venture of the Starship Enterprise

RECITALS 1

Crossing over: Anne Sofie von Otter puts her Lieders to one side to sing new songs by Elvis Costello

THE TIMES ARTS

RECITALS 2

... and the Wigmore Hall also enjoys Thomas Hampson paying bicentenary tribute to Carl Loewe

OFFER

Special prices on tickets to Matthew Hart's dance work: see the Theatre Club panel

Enterprise culture for one-trek minds

FILM: Debra Craine boldly goes where millions have gone before, into the ever-expanding *Star Trek* universe

It's time to "out" myself. As dance critic of *The Times* I spend my evenings in the theatre captivated by the spectacle of decorous ladies in tights, being wooed by noble lads in tights. But later, in the privacy of my own living room, I indulge in a very different sort of spectacle — that of Starfleet officers and Klingon warriors, transporter beams and holodeck theme parks, phasers, wormholes and warp drive. For in my other life I am a closet Trekkler, an armchair traveller in the *Star Trek* universe.

I am not alone. There are millions more like me, resident in more than 100 countries, devotees of four different *Star Trek* television series, loyal followers of seven *Star Trek* films, and happy consumers in a £1 billion global industry. We buy the mugs, the starship telephones, the glow-in-the-dark watches, the communication key rings, the videos and the *Star Trek* Barbie dolls. We support a massive publishing industry, everything from *The Klingon Dictionary* to *The Star Trek Encyclopedia*. There are more than 70 million *Star Trek* books in print, available in more than 15 languages, including Chinese, Norwegian and Hebrew; 13 *Star Trek* books are sold every minute.

We attend *Star Trek* conventions held every weekend of every year; we read *Hamlet* translated into Klingon; we even buy our groceries with a *Star Trek* credit card. And according to the British Psychological Society, our addiction is akin to smoking or alcoholism. Take away our books and our videos and we go off the rails.

Yet the Trekkler phenomenon had a modest beginning. The original series, the so-called "classic" *Star Trek*, was devised by Gene Roddenberry and was first aired in America on September 8, 1966. A low-budget, modest affair, it ran for just 79 episodes, and after three years because of poor ratings. But *Star Trek* was the show that

wouldn't die. Endless syndicated repeats gave birth to an indestructible underground cult: then in 1979 came the first Hollywood film, and in 1987 *The Next Generation*, the first of three spin-off television shows.

And now there is a new *Star Trek* film to fuel our obsession in this 30th anniversary year. *Star Trek*:



Star Trek has endured because it provides a vision of hope

JONATHAN FRAKES

First Contact, which opens in Britain on Friday, features Patrick Stewart (a former RSC actor) as Jean-Luc Picard, captain of the Enterprise E, leading his crew into battle against the machine-like Borg, a confrontation that takes both sides back to the day in 2063 when Earth first made contact with beings from outer space.

The film took \$60 million in its first ten days of release in America, making it the biggest grossing *Star Trek* film ever. It features the cast of *The Next Generation*, the most successful of the telly spin-offs

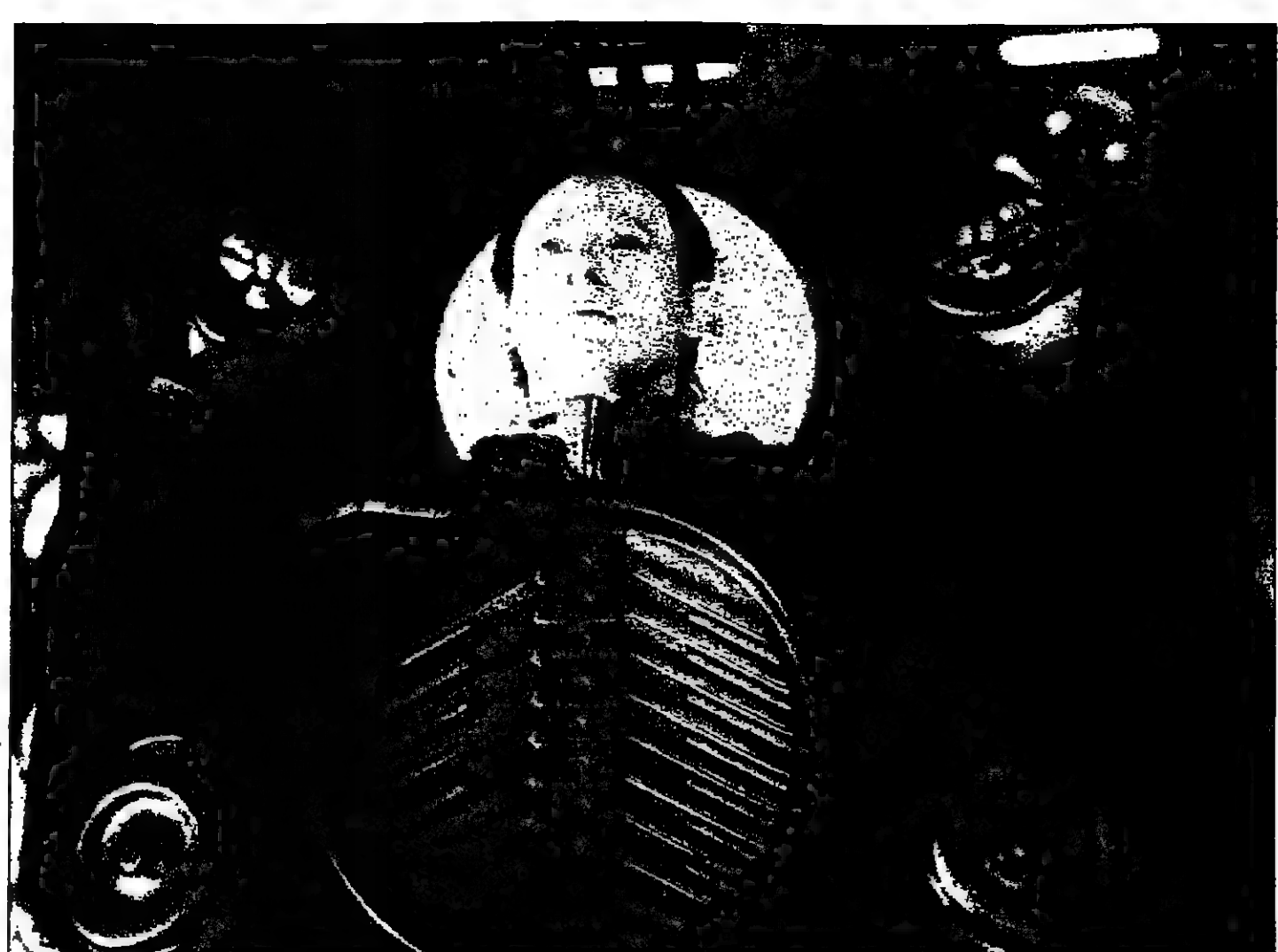
(*Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager* are the other two), and it is also the best, thanks to imaginative script-writing, high production values, and the skills of Jonathan Frakes, who injects a good deal of humour into the proceedings both as actor and director.

What is it about Gene Roddenberry's simplistic view of life in outer space that continues to inspire us 30 years after the former airline pilot pitched his idea to sceptical TV executives? Is it the warm-hearted liberalism of the Enterprise crew? The optimism of a Utopian universe where diplomacy triumphs over discord and where good guys always win and bad guys always lose? Or is it the perennial lure of science fiction, the need to believe we are not alone in the galaxy?

Frakes, who stars as Picard's sidekick Commander Riker, places his faith in the "feel-good" factor. "*Star Trek* has endured because it provides us with a vision of hope for the future," he says.

"When I auditioned for the television show nine years ago, Gene told me that in the 24th century there will be no hunger, no greed, and all the children will know how to read. Well given what's going on in Bosnia and elsewhere, the world is in such an appalling state. Many of the people who watch the show would be lucky to have such a future. And we don't apologise for that optimism."

Indeed, there are even those who will argue the case for *Star Trek* as a shaper of moral values. Right from the beginning, the Roddenberry ethos was defined by its unabashed humanism. "That is what's so healthy about the show," says Frakes. "It is anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-violence. The objective was always to make some kind of statement about honour and respect for human life. I think that, without a doubt it has done some good: it has spoken to people. At the heart of it has always been a moral imperative."



Star Trek: First Contact, which grossed \$60 million in the first ten days of its American release, opens in British cinemas on Friday

Lofty ideals for a mere entertainment, one might counter. Yet the evangelical fervour of some of its adherents suggests that *Trekdom* is often dangerously close to religious passion. "It would make Gene Roddenberry turn in his grave," says Frakes. "He consciously avoided discussing religion at all costs. But, you know, there are far worse things to believe in."

And believers embrace an unusually wide spectrum of society.

"You find *Star Trek* fans in the unlikelyst places: brain surgeons, scientists like Stephen Hawking, who came and did a show with us, even our President, big Bill Clinton. He is such a *Star Trek* fan that we once had to record a birthday message for him in our uniforms on the bridge of the Enterprise."

Yet for all its success, there is one thing *Star Trek* has never enjoyed: the approbation of the critical establishment. "We were snubbed

by the *Emmys*," laments Frakes. "*The Next Generation* won for make-up and hair and special effects, but never for the acting or the scripts. It's the science fiction curse. The genre is just not respected as highbrow or arty enough, even though we tell imaginative, intelligent stories with a healthy respect for the language."

But *Star Trek* may yet have its moment on the perch of high art. According to Frakes, Jerry Gold-

smith, the man who created the theme for *The Next Generation* and wrote the music for *First Contact*, has been approached to write a *Star Trek* opera. Ridiculous? Maybe. But opera loves the grandeur of mythology, the broad sweep of morality, and the uplift of redemptive promise. And if there's one denizen of popular culture which harbours such aspirations, that one is *Star Trek*. Even if it is only a television show.

RECITALS: Celebrating Carl Loewe's bicentenary; plus, Anne Sofie von Otter joins forces with the Brodsky Quartet

WORLD MUSIC

THE songwriting talents of the unjustly neglected Carl Loewe have already been brought to our attention in his bicentenary year with a flurry of recordings and live performances. Loewe's dramatic ballads were firm favourites in the Wagner household — indeed, Wagner used to sing them himself regularly — though it is significant that he believed the poetry made more impact than the music.

Celebrating Loewe's 200th birthday just seven days after the event, Thomas Hampson chose to illustrate a less familiar side of the composer, with a group of seven lyrical songs. Bringing to them the heightened dramatic response and alertness to verbal inflection that always characterise his readings, Hampson made a strong case for further investigation of this oeuvre. The anger at the death of loved ones in *Die Überfahrt*, the veiled contemplation of *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*: all were projected as tellingly by this master singer as the

Ballads from a master

Hampson/Rieger
Wigmore Hall

group of Schubert songs that followed. But Hampson is a conscientious scholar too. His wish to see the autograph manuscript of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* cycle — which has in fact not survived — led him on a fascinating trail. Schumann originally wrote not 16 but 20 songs for *Dichterliebe*. Four were published only posthumously, and it is still not entirely clear why they were omitted from the cycle.

Hampson and his collaborator Renate Hilmar-Voit point out that the rejected songs have texts that deal with

the darker side of dreams and fairy-tale, which may give us a clue as to Schumann's reading of Heine. Furthermore, the 16 familiar songs in the original version show differences in a number of details. This makes the performance of that version worthwhile, though I would be hard put to say that any of the discrepancies were improvements: the sighting of *propagandists of Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, for example, were sadly missed.

Possibly Hampson's unusually, almost self-indulgently slow tempo for that song, as well as for *Aus meinen Tränen* and *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen*, were justified by the various instructions to the performers that apparently adorn the original version. For the rest, he raged, whispered, yearned and wept, exploiting every expressive device in the book. Wolfram Rieger's accompaniments, if a little vulnerable technically, were strongly characterised.

BARRY MILLINGTON



Anne Sofie von Otter and Elvis Costello: seductive rendition of disappointed lives

Night of anarchic song

AS IF to prove that anything Björk could do, she could possibly do better, Anne Sofie von Otter joined forces with the Brodsky Quartet for a programme of sophisticated and gently anarchic new and newish music, which filled the Wigmore Hall two nights running.

Von Otter has never been one for paddling steadily up the Lieders singers' mainstream: the turbulent waters against which she chooses to brace herself have included both Nordic rarities and British barrack-room ballads. England is, indeed, virtually her adopted land. Having spent most of her childhood in London as the daughter of a Swedish diplomat, she clearly found time to tune her precocious ear to a dialect or two, and of late every London recital has seen her trying out a new one.

On Friday it was the turn of East Anglia and Scotland (with a touch of Danish in

Von Otter/
Brodsky Quartet
Wigmore Hall

between) as she tackled five British folk songs by Percy Grainger, their accompaniments arranged plangently for string quartet by Julian Jacobson and by the Brodsky's own Violist, Paul Cassidy.

At the start, the voice seemed just too laid back to penetrate the string textures: von Otter appeared to need a Fisherman's Friend rather more urgently than a jolly sailor lad.

By the time she had reached Elvis Costello, though, her mezzo-soprano was in fine fettle. She and the Brodsky Quartet had commissioned *Three Distracted Women* from him.

These cameos — of a jealous understudy, a disappointed lover of independent means,

and the wife of a failed businessman — lived out their Eleanor Rigby-style lives, plain words pungently set by their author. In a seductive UK premiere, Von Otter went on to pay tribute to various other English muses. First came Respighi's setting of Shelley's *The Sunset (Il Tramonto)*, luscious with the afterglow of later Romanticism. It could have been written with von Otter's voice in mind. Then there was John Woolrich, honoured in his menacing and witty *The Devil and the Ploughman*.

The evening's most memorable first performance, though, was Peter Sculthorpe's *Island Dreaming*, another von Otter/Brodsky commission. Aboriginal in inspiration and language, with low, dark vocalise and finely imagined string writing, drawing out a rapt, 12-minute marine songline.

HILARY FINCH

Rhythmic magic

THEATREGOERS at the Barbican for *As You Like It* last weekend could scarcely believe their eyes. While the RSC conjured up the Forest of Arden on stage, the rest of the centre had undergone an even more remarkable transformation. A global village of stalls selling ethnic clothing, jewellery and crafts had sprung up in the foyers and galleries. Weird and wonderful sounds escaped from workshops held in every nook and cranny. Strangely-garbed people sat cross-legged on the floor of the bars and cafés while children ran amok. It was as if Glastonbury had materialised in one of London's more reverential halls of culture.

In fact it was Womad, the organisation set up by Peter Gabriel to bring music and dance from around the world to new audiences. Strangely, after 15 years holding events in exotic locations from St Mark's Square in Venice to the Australian outback, it was the first time Womad had come to London, and they took over the Barbican for three days.

As usual it was a varied and exciting bill of fare with the biggest names drawn mainly from Africa. Papa Wemba from Zaire offered turbo-charged Afro-pop, sweaty dance music full of soukous rhythms. Thomas Mapfumo and Blacks Unlimited brought the more traditional sounds of chimurenga, built around the dense interplay of guitar and mbira, the African thumb piano. Salif Keita, the albino riot from Mali, was also in fine form, his high, passionate vocals which tell of the epic struggles and tragedies of African history providing a fitting climax to the weekend.

Yet if African music was at the core of the festival, many of its most memorable mo-

ments were provided by musicians from other corners of the world. From Pakistan the Sabri Brothers gave a thrilling exhibition of qawwali, the devotional music of the Sufis. Rhythmic patterns of harmonium and tabla which sound repetitive, but in fact are constantly shifting, are overlain with joyous voices. Yungchun Lhamo from Tibet offered more devotional music with her traditional Buddhist hymns. Without

Womad Global
Spirit
Barbican

instrumental accompaniment, the ethereal beauty of her voice hushed into respectful silence an audience which had mostly come to dance to the rhythms of Afro-pop. In a weekend full of musical magic, however, two moments stood out. The first was the thunderous drums of the ancient royal court which closed the performance by Isonga, the Rwandan ballet. This was an astounding performance in its own right, a beacon of hope from a troubled continent. The second was an extraordinary musical melting-pot from the Afro-Celt Sound System, which combined the haunting voice of Gaelic lament, the excitement of Senegalese talking drums, floating druidic harp and uilleann pipes and swirling modern dance patterns. They refused to quit the stage but no-one, except the harassed organisers, felt they had overstayed their welcome.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

LONDON

Cambridge Theatre
Until Jan 2
● THE musical *Grease*, with Richard Cullen as Danny and Shona Lindsay as Sandy, has moved to the Cambridge Theatre. Members can buy best available seats to the greatest party in town for just £17.50 (normally £27.50) for any Mon to Thurs evening performance, with a free glass of wine to celebrate the festive season. Tel 0171-494 5084, quoting your membership number. Hurry, because tickets are limited.

Vandeville Theatre
Dec 11-13 (2pm & 7pm), 14 (11am)
● TICKETS £12 (normally £13) for an enchanting adaptation of Roald Dahl's much-loved children's book, *The Witches*. Tel 0171-836 9987

Peacock Theatre
Dec 16-21
● THE City Ballet of London launches its new season with the ever-popular ballet *Cinderella*, choreographed by Matthew Hart to Prokofiev's enchanting score. Tickets £16 to £22

THE TIMES THEATRE CLUB

(normally £20 to £27.50). Tel 0171-314 8800

DUNDEE
Dundee Rep Theatre
Jan 7-10 (7.15pm)
● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £8.50 to £9.75) to the enchanting Christmas show, *The Wizard of Oz*. Tickets limited. Tel 01382 223530

DARLINGTON
Civic Theatre
Jan 8-24
● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £5.50 to £12) for any Wed to Fri 7pm performance of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Tel 01325 486555

TO JOIN the Theatre Club either send a cheque for £12.50 — payable to The Theatre Club — your name, address and telephone number to The Theatre Club, P.O. Box 2164, Colchester CO2 8TL, or telephone 01206 225145 using your credit card. Allow 28 days for delivery of your membership pack. For general inquiries call 0171-387 9673

PRESTON

Charter Theatre
Dec 13-Jan 4
● SAVE £2 on top-priced seats (normally £8.95) for *Dick Whittington*. Tel 01772 258558

COVENTRY
Warwick Arts Centre
Dec 21, 27-29; Jan 1-4, 6
● BEST available seats £6.95, £4.95 for children (normally up to £9.50) to the musical show, *The Amazing Tale of Goosey King Wenceslas*. Tel 01203 524524

GUILDFORD
Civic Hall
Dec 23
● TWO £8.50 or £10.50 tickets for the price of one to see the magician Wayne Dobson in his spectacular show. Tel 01483 444555

TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Civic Theatre
Dec 28-Jan 5
● SAVE £2 on tickets (normally £9.50 to £12.50) to *Peter Pan*. Tel 01892 530613

IN THE great scheme of things, the future of the Café Royal's Green Room ranks lower than, say, admission prices at the British Museum. But to see a grand old lady resorting to gaudy lipstick and micro-skirts is not an edifying spectacle.

I understand that no acts have yet been booked for the new year, an ominous sign for those who care about the dearth of world-class cabaret venues in London. At its best, the Green Room has staged

some superb residencies. The pop singers Craig Douglas and Susan Maughan, who are in residence for the next fortnight, are personable, hard-working troupers, whose bubblegum medleys would go down well on a cruise ship. But this is not the right place

for them, even if it is the Christmas party season. Douglas at least possesses an appealing line of self-deprecating banter, and his voice is still in mellifluous shape almost 40 years after *Only Sixteen* went to the top of the charts. A *Teenager in Love* was recalled

off by the band; tributes were paid to Neil Sedaka and Bobby Darin. The feisty Maughan returned for a joint assault on *Dancing In The Street*, *Dream Lover* and other oldies. The abiding memory, though, is of Douglas strolling among the audience during the climax of his sex and finding the man nearest the stage had dozed off. Douglas deserved better; so does the Café Royal.

CLIVE DAVIS

POP: The slow death of cabaret

Troupers' last post

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Finning the

Shortage of sellers forces up prices

Would-be buyers are back in numbers but houses are hard to find, reports Rachel Kelly

Estate agents are opening seven days a week to cope with demand from the booming housing market in the run-up to Christmas. In London and the South East, in particular, demand for family houses in the £150,000-£300,000 bracket has led to what the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) has called "panic" buying.

Mark Bachelor, a Gascoigne-Peas agent in Surrey, said offices were open in Weybridge, Richmond, Kingston, Putney, Twickenham and Teddington for buyers who had no other time to view properties.

"We are selling to people who work long hours in town, and Sunday is often the only time that dual-income couples can see property. We are very busy with buyers wanting to look, but we haven't got enough properties to sell."

Geoff Hunt, of Barnard Marcus, in Sheen, said: "Sunday has become a normal working day for estate agents."

Elsewhere in the country agents are opening in pockets where the market is busiest. Peter Waterston, of Halifax Property Services in Beverley, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, said: "We are opening because we can't afford to miss the commercial opportunity."

Fries are already up 1.2 per cent on a year ago, Halifax figures show, and estate agents say that will continue into the new year. Analysts expect prices to rise a further 7 per cent next year.

Peter Rollings, of Foxtons, confirms the pre-Christmas rush. Foxtons report that family houses in Battersea, Wandsworth, Putney and Chiswick, in southwest London, have already increased in value by 20 per cent over the last year. Period flats and houses in South Kensington, Fulham, Chelsea and Notting Hill are selling well.

"Usually we would expect people's minds to turn to Christmas shopping as opposed to shopping for houses," says Ivor Dickinson, of Douglas & Gordon. "Traditionally more appointments are cancelled last minute in December than all the other months put together, but it isn't the case this year; we are exceptionally busy. The number of offers made in the last month is up 25 per cent on last year."

Period properties in the Home Counties, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire are the best performers in the country market, says Patrick Ramsay, of Knight Frank. Prices are up 20 per cent for

upmarket country houses and smart London town houses, says the Halifax. But the boom has thrown up as many problems as it has solved. RICS estimates that though a million homeowners have been released from the trap of negative equity, those who try to move can find little to buy and are often gazumped.

The number of houses for sale is down by one third on last year from an average of 161 per estate agency in September 1995 to 112 in October this year, the lowest figure since December 1988, says Ian Perry of RICS. "People are buying, but they have nothing to sell. Either they are first-time buyers or they have been renting."

Tim Page-Ratcliff, of Strutt & Parker in Lewes, East Sussex, said: "I have over 1,000 registered applicants for eight properties in the £250,000-plus range."

Hugh Dunsmore-Hardy, chief executive of the National Association of Estate Agents, says: "Almost 40 per cent of our members report that they have dealt with cases of gazumping. It is endemic in the middle ranges of the market for houses priced between £100,000 and £200,000 because of the lack of properties for sale."

The NAEA now receives two or three complaints a week, and the Labour Party last week said it would push for a system akin to that in Scotland where a deal is binding once an offer is accepted.

Mr Dunsmore-Hardy said desperate buyers could hire an agent to find a property on their behalf. The very top and bottom ends of the market remain sluggish, as do pockets in the North and the West. "Studio and badly converted flats bought by 1980s first-time buyers are now bypassed by first-time buyers," says Gary Marsh from the Halifax.

Brocket Hall, the £15 million stately home in Hertfordshire that was once the family home of the disgraced Lord Brocket, has been on the market since May; so has Aubrey House, in Notting Hill, west London, for £25 million. No 100 Cheyne Walk has been for sale for nearly a year, despite a £1.25 million price cut to £5 million.

RICS expects the market to calm down in the new year. "An expected influx of properties will tend to temper price rises and restore a sense of proportion to the market," Mr Perry said. "In the meantime the best advice is to take time to find the right property."



Diana and Simon Ayrton with William and Polly outside their Wandsworth home, which quickly attracted a buyer

Gazumped at every turn

ANNABEL SALTER, 29, is desperately looking for somewhere bigger than her two-bedroom Battersea flat, but has been gazumped at every turn.

Ms Salter, of Douglas & Gordon's Chelsea lettings department, put her flat on the market in July, for £64,500. "In October I found a three-bedroom flat in Earlsfield for £117,000. It needed quite a bit of work, so I made an offer of £110,000, which was accepted. But a day or so later a cash buyer offered £115,000, so I knew it wasn't worth competing with them, as my flat was only under offer," she says.

"Two weeks later, my agent said he had found the perfect house at £128,950. I drove to the agent's to make an offer of £127,000, to be told someone else had just made an offer. I said I would increase my offer to the asking price, but they refused. I later tried to put in an offer for £131,000 but they wouldn't accept it."



Annabel Salter outside her two-bedroom flat in Battersea, which she put on the market in July for £64,500

Christmas sell-out in the housing market

Although there were only 18 shopping days left Christmas, people were shopping for houses, not presents, last Saturday. When Curchods estate agents, in Weybridge, Surrey, opened at 9am, the phones started ringing, as would-be buyers arranged viewings or wanted to know if there was anything new on its books. It was the climax of a week in which Mark Knight and his staff did as much business as in the whole of December 1995.

"More than 40 new buyers registered this week and we arranged more than 70 viewings. Last December we

arranged 63 viewings and 45 new buyers registered," says Mr Knight.

Janet and Neville Shore came in to Curchods on their way to an open house viewing. Mr Shore, 36, a building services engineer, and Mrs Shore, 31, an insurance manager, have been house-hunting for two months. "We want a four-bedroom detached house in Weybridge, up to £200,000. Most properties are too expensive, and there aren't enough on the market in our price range," said Mrs Shore. They have not put their three-bedroom terraced house on the market in case it sells before they find anything to buy.

Timo and Johanna Hartkainen, both 30, are bankers, currently renting in Richmond. "We came in to Curchods a month ago with a price limit of £200,000 for a four-bedroom house but can't find anything in this range, so we are raising our limit to £240,000," said Mr Hartkainen.

Erin Gage, 36, and Graham Lewis, 34, came down from Barnes to find out if there was any news on the three-bedroom house they hope to buy. Ms Gage and Mr Lewis, both British Airways cabin crew, have put in an offer on £130,000. "We looked in Barnes, but two sales fell through, and

everything became too expensive. One house was taken off the market at £130,000. It was worth £160,000, six months later. Decent properties in our price range go in less than two weeks," said Ms Gage.

Edward Thompson, 48, a conveyancing solicitor, is a would-be seller hoping to arrange a valuation for the five-bedroom Victorian house he currently rents out. "The market has picked up, and there is a great demand for large family houses," he says. "I hope to sell later in the new year."

AMANDA LOOSE

Dreaming of a sunny Christmas

MORE than seven million people would move abroad if they won the National Lottery, a new Abbey National survey reveals. For most of us, the closest we can hope for is to rent somewhere for a couple of weeks during the Christmas holidays. South Africa in particular is becoming more popular as a source of Christmas houses to rent, from Cape Dutch-style white stucco villas to farmer's cottages. "People want something different at Christmas now. Long-haul travel in general has become more popular in the last couple of years," says Sonia Burdell, a travel agent from the Maidenhead firm Euro Contacts International.

"Since 1995 when the country opened its doors to tourism, there has been much bad publicity about violence in the region, but we have many clients who return who really don't know what all the fuss is about. Tourists are perfectly safe in tourist areas," says Ms Burdell.

Basil van Blommestein, from the South African Tourist Board, says Britain has always been the largest supplier of tourists to South Africa.

"The numbers have swelled since the inauguration of Nelson Mandela. It is a 'world in one' country, mountains, beaches, rivers and 350-year-old vineyards."

Vanessa Crear specialises in letting South African houses and still has some available on her books.

Pam Golding Properties are the biggest independent agents in South Africa, and can arrange rentals in the desirable areas of Hermanus and The Garden Route. Although they do not keep any properties on their books, they can connect interested parties with houses.

Others are seeking to rent in the Caribbean. The area's most fashionable houses have already been snapped up, including Princess Margaret's home on Mustique, for £4,350 a week, and Richard Branson's on the Virgin Islands, from £9,550 a day.

Most agents have little left on their books, but two villas are available for rental this Christmas with The Owners Syndicate. The Villa Grenadine in Fort Jedy, Grenada, sleeps eight to ten, with a private swimming pool; £2,484 a week. The Plantation Beach Villas, Tobago has six three-bedroom villas at £2,303 a week, with a housekeeper-cleaning service provided.

EMMA PARSONS

● Contact Pam Golding 0171-824 8800 and Vanessa Crear 01932 84912 for South African lettings and The Owners' Syndicate 0181-767 9225 for details of the villas in the Caribbean.

Winning through after a 20-year fight

After two years in temporary accommodation, the tenants of a Victorian row in Haverstock Hill, London, are back.

But their flats now look very different. When they left, their homes were crumbling and almost beyond repair. Now, after 20 years of campaigning to save them from the bulldozers, they have been refurbished and restored to some of their former glory.

The houses were bought from Camden Council in 1993 by two housing associations which provide low-cost accommodation for those in serious need of housing - Circle 33 Housing Trust and Asra Greater London Housing Association.

The villas were acquired by Camden council in 1972, under a compulsory-purchase order, via the Department of Transport as part of a road-widening scheme. The squatters in Nos 112-124 decided to act.

Built in the 1860s, the houses have a varied history. Some were used as a girls' school or a tyre-repair business, others were a centre for Bulgarian refugees.

In the 1950s Geoffrey Gilbert, the photographer and botanist, who worked at Kew Gardens, lived at No 116, filling his garden with rare plants, many of which have survived.

"The houses were blighted by the road-widening scheme, which was eventually dropped," says Steve Stokes of Circle 33. "The almost-derelict villas were kept alive by the efforts of the squatters, who already had strong connections with the local community. Many of them were artists who became local businessmen. They were personally committed to the houses," he says. Inspired by the success of Belpark, a co-operative which

Amanda Loose talks to the people who fought to save their Victorian houses from being demolished

had successfully campaigned for and refurbished other properties on Haverstock Hill, the residents formed Belpark II in 1980, and began to lobby Camden council.

Judith Allen started squatting at Haverstock Hill in 1989, and became involved with the legal aspects of the struggle to preserve the houses. "They were beautiful Victorian houses which had fallen into disarray. We felt that the odds were really stacked against us."

At the beginning there was a core group of ten of us. But we did have the support of the local Belsize residents and concentrated on being very positive," she says.

In 1989 Camden council decided to sell the site. So Belpark II commissioned a feasibility study for the refurbishment of the villas. Then Circle 33 and Asra became involved. "There was a long gestation period when the two housing associations, Belpark II and Camden Council liaised very closely," says Ian Taylor of Housing Association grants in 1991, when we were invited to prepare a bid for refurbishment and redevelopment."

Approximately 60 per cent of the £6 million funding was provided by the Housing Corporation, and the rest was raised by Asra and Circle 33. They appointed the architects Pollard Thomas & Edwards,

and for 18 months they and the tenants met monthly to develop their plans. "At first, I don't think the Belpark II members believed it was going to happen. But after living there for 20 years and putting so much into the villas, they knew what they wanted," says Teresa Borsuk of Pollard Thomas & Edwards.

"They had been hard at it for a long time and had managed to provide an environment for themselves which worked very well. So, of course, from the outset they wanted to retain the character of the villas, which wasn't always possible," she says. The members of the co-operative were keen to maintain the spacious rooms and high ceilings in the properties, as well as period fireplaces and flooring. They were also actively involved in the layout and design of their own flats.

"The interiors had to be gutted, but they had to satisfy everyone," says Ms Borsuk. "At times it was almost like having two separate clients. Circle 33 were obviously concerned with financial restrictions and have particular requirements. We had to convince the co-operative that these would be beneficial," she says.

The housing associations obviously needed to provide as much accommodation as possible, and the architects devised an innovative way to

achieve this at numbers 118 and 120. This pair of villas were in the most dilapidated condition and Camden council had planning approval for their demolition. However, this approval elapsed during the group's negotiations, and the council decided that the two villas could be retained.

"The costs would have been astronomical," says Ms Borsuk. "So we agreed to rebuild them, but by duplicating the facades. We also managed to incorporate an extra floor at the back of the two villas, to create more accommodation to pay for the work."

As the exterior were in such bad repair, the architects had to copy the original stonework from 1903 photographs. They also recreated the first-floor conservatory at No 116, and by adding a second to the front of No 118, created a winter garden for tenants. No 112 had to be demolished and another villa was built in its place.

Work was completed last year and all but 10 per cent of the original tenants have now returned to live there, says Ms Allen. Initially, she says, there was a feeling that there was a divide between the original Belpark II members and the new residents.

"I suppose there was a feeling of ownership among those of us who had set up the scheme and, understandably, some of the people who came in after the refurbishment felt like outsiders. But there is a much stronger sense of community now."

The repairs took three years of very hard work but it was worth it. We not only saved the houses and kept the community together, but we also extended them. This is so unusual for London and extremely precious."



The restored facades of the Haverstock Hill houses

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

Save £2 on China exhibition tickets



The Times, in association with the British Museum, gives you the opportunity to get a discount off the price of tickets for the China exhibition. Instead of the full price of £5, Times readers can buy tickets for £3 each.

The *Mysteries of Ancient China* is the first major Chinese exhibition in London for 20 years. It includes spectacular new discoveries from China's recently excavated royal tombs and sacrificial pits.

All you have to do is present the voucher below at the exhibition ticket kiosk at the British Museum. A timed ticketing system is in operation. (For further information call the British Museum on 0171-323 8783.)

You can use the advance booking system for which a £1 per ticket booking fee is charged. (You will still save £1 by quoting The Times.) Contact First Call on 0171-420 0000. Please bring this voucher with your ticket.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

CHANGING TIMES

Why cormorant report was shooting in the dark

Brian Clarke tries to repair some of the damage done to the image of angling by a misleading article

In all my years as an angler I have never known greater levels of frustration and anger than were generated by the reports last week claiming that anglers are engaged in the wholesale slaughter of cormorants.

Angling bodies, fishery owners and managers and countless ordinary anglers along the banks were appalled not only by the original story run by the *Angling Times*, but by the way this report was taken up by national newspapers, radio and television.

Everywhere the inference was that anglers themselves were doing the shooting: that organised bands of militants were roaming the countryside, blasting at every black bird in sight — and that large numbers of their fellows, if not actually doing it, supported it.

The focus of typical comment has now moved elsewhere, but dreadful damage has been left behind. Those images and headlines are deep in the public psyche. They may never be erased. In the minds of many, the image of angling as a harmless and rather dotty pursuit has been smeared.

The result, in the longer term, can be guessed at but not predicted. What is needed in the short term are facts. The first is that anglers are not going around shooting cormorants or any other birds. The *Angling Times*, if deep in its editorial, made that clear. It was a group of "independent commercial owners" who were "taking the only option open" — shorthand for a tiny group of irresponsible coarse fishery owners.

Second, there are no large-scale "organised extermination squads" at work in fishery management itself, despite what some follow-up reports have suggested. There may be a few wild men out there, just as there are hothouse in most activities that involve human self-interest, but they are no more representative of fishery management than the rioters in Haysel stadium were representative of football. The *Angling Times* produced just one. Virtually all else was comment and hearsay based on that unidentified individual's remarks and claims.

Third, the claim by the *Angling Times* that a picture of a man, a gun and a dead cormorant was "the picture



The cormorant has never been a threatened species in Britain and, until recently, numbers were controlled. Now winter numbers are rising rapidly inland

every angler wants to see", was, quite simply, not true. The *Angling Times* does much excellent campaigning, often by provoking for effect, but this statement has outraged every leading angling body and the hundreds of thousands of fishermen they represent. Letters of disassociation from some of them appeared in *The Times* yesterday.

A few more facts. While, as in every other field of conservation, angling has its short-sighted fanatics, most anglers see nature in the round. Vast numbers of anglers are members of organisations such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Wildlife Trusts — as I am.

It is one of the great joys of angling that the sport takes those who practise it deep into the countryside and causes them to be quiet and still. There, unlike many users of the countryside, they see a great deal of the wild creatures around them. The highlight of many an angler's day is not the fish he catches, but the sight of a heron stalking through a silence of its own making, or the blue splinter that a kingfisher puts in his eye or — yes — even the sight of a cormorant backlit by the

sun, with beads of water bejewelling the edges of its outstretched wings. Above all, anglers — who will do it if they do not — fight for the conservation of our rivers and our lakes with passion and the law. The Anglers' Conservation Association is one of the most formidable protectors of all life that depends on clean water. It

benefited from this work. A few more facts. The cormorant has never been a threatened species in Britain and its numbers, until recently, were always controlled. In 1981, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, it was given blanket protection as a result of an EC directive designed to protect a few specific colonies of cormorants on mainland Europe. Since then the numbers have risen at a dramatic rate and, confronted with largely fished-out coastal waters, the birds have increasingly turned inland.

A couple of days before the present storm broke, the Department of the Environment held a seminar to consider the latest research on the effects of this. The research was carried out by the British Trust for Ornithology and the Glasgow University Unit of Applied Ornithology, among others. The report showed that there are now about 7,200 breeding pairs in the United Kingdom, supplemented by birds from the European mainland that come and go. At least 19,000 birds winter here — around 6,000 of them inland. Winter numbers were rising at a staggering rate, at up to 24.8 per cent a year on

inland gravel pits. For gravel pits, read trout and coarse fisheries. Further increases, the report said, were likely. Next, the bird's food intake. Estimates vary about how much the cormorant eats, but most fall between 1lb and 2lb of fish a day. There is no difficulty in estimating how big a proportion of an inland-feeding bird's food is made up

of trout and coarse fish: it is 100 per cent. If one cormorant eats 1.5lb of freshwater fish a day for 365 days, it will consume about 550lb of fish a year. Four cormorants will eat one ton; 400 will eat 100 tons. And so on. Every year.

However, though the effects on some individual waters are known to have been dire, assessments of the problem on a national scale are not easy to make. The normal cycle of life, death, disease, spawning success, pollution and predation from other sources must all be taken into account in any calculation of the loss due to cormorants alone.

Detailed, painstaking and, of course, time-consuming research is the only way of establishing what that net loss is. It is already happening on many fronts. The DoE has had a dozen studies under way and some fisheries organisations have been doing their own work. All of anglers' representative bodies recognise the need for this work, support it and collaborate in it.

No reasonable person will be surprised that anglers are concerned about this. The pressure on some fishery owners, when, day upon day they see flights of cormorants eating their stock and, they fear, their livelihoods, must be very great. It would be humbling to suggest that here and there a bird is not shot in sheer frustration — but widespread massacres? No.

Only when the results are to hand will the true scale of any problem be known, and then everyone recognises that any programme of cormorant management that includes culling — and it may well come to that — will need to be pursued in Brussels, where the present legislation has its origins.

In the meantime, just as millions of anglers see our environment in the round, so must others professing a wildlife interest, if they are to be taken seriously. In this wider view, two points above all need to be acknowledged. The first is that, of necessity, we have created on our island a landscape that is wholly artificial. Everything within it needs to be managed to maintain balances which, for better or worse, we have destroyed in our need for food, shelter and diversion.

The second is that, unlike birds and rabbits, fish are not warm or cuddly creatures with photogenically endearing habits. Hence they do not attract the romanticism with which some other animals are viewed. For all that, and though they are mostly under the water and out of sight, they are a part of the equation, too.

Results Page 41

BOWLS EBA opts to relax all-white ruling

By DAVID RHYS JONES

BOWLS may rank with cricket as a sport that epitomises village life and the best of the English summer, but the lazy, hazy image created by the all-white uniform will soon, it seems, be a thing of the past.

Players representing their counties next summer will don coloured shirts if the 35 county associations in England take advantage of a decision made at the annual meeting of the English Bowling Association (EBA) last weekend.

Fred Inch, the assistant secretary of the EBA, said yesterday: "County associations will have to register their chosen shade and get our approval for the design of garment. Sponsors may well want to get involved, supplying the shirts, which may even carry the sponsor's logo — as long as it's not too obtrusive. We intend to keep a tight control over what happens."

When their new gear has been approved, county teams will cut a colourful dash that is bound to raise a few eyebrows in friendlies, Middleton Cup matches, and even the national championships at the game's headquarters in Beach House Park, Worthing.

"Clubs who wish to follow suit can apply to their counties for approval in exactly the same way, but we thought it best if the idea was tried out in the national inter-county championships, because the Middleton Cup is the game's showpiece," Inch said.

Stopping short of the whole hog, there will, as yet, be no trackuits or cricket-style pyjamas to be seen on England's bowling greens, and trousers, long ones, will continue to be the regulation white or cream.

Progressive women bowlers have already made hats optional, and introduced coloured tops at international level, but English men — the men's and women's associations are separate — have, until now, clung to the traditional all-white gear that may look smart, but is confusing to spectators.

Officials have admitted that having both teams in white has been a barrier to aspirations of becoming a spectator sport. Television has dictated that competitors in the world indoor championships at Preston wear coloured shirts, but this decision brings colour into the mainstream outdoor game in England for the first time.

'Most anglers see nature in the round and vast numbers are members of wildlife organisations'

alone has pursued more than 2,000 polluters through the courts, many to the High Court — and has lost two cases, one of them on a technicality. All waterside birds and mammals have



The front page that sparked the row

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This deal is taken from the late Hugh Kelsey's *The Tough Game* — an imaginary Gold Cup Final where the reader is presented with 64 nightmare problems in both declarer play and defence.

Dealer East. Game all. Teams

♠ KQJ4
♥ A98
♦ K1085
♣ KQ

W E
S N
S

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: eight of clubs.

South plays Four Spades after East has opened the bidding with One Club. East wins the club lead with the ace and returns the five of clubs to dummy's king. Both defenders follow to the king of spades. How should declarer continue? The heart finesse is likely to be wrong and there is a problem of control. South cannot afford to draw all the trumps before raking diamonds for that might enable East to establish a second club trick. Nor is it safe to play a trump to the ace in order to run the jack of diamonds for, if the trumps are 3-1, East may be able to promote a trump

trick for the defence by forcing dummy twice in clubs. The diamonds must be tackled from dummy at trick four and, since West may have the queen but not the ace, the right card to play is the king. It will not matter if West wins the second round of diamonds for at that stage declarer can afford to go straight in with the ace of hearts. These were the East-West hands:

♠ 10852
♥ J10852
♦ 7642
♣ 873

This year's Gold Cup finals are being played in Scotland at the Reebels Hydro. Spectators are welcome (free of charge). For further details ring Anna Gudge on 01787 881920. Updates of the scores in the matches will be available on:

In this year's Hubert Phillips final, played at the weekend, Michelle Brunner, John Holland, Tony Forrester and Jason Hackett beat Harry and Sally Anoyrkatis, Ian Pagan and Peter Dunsby by 5,500 aggregate points.

Correction: On the deal in Monday's column, declarer of course carries out the elimination by ruffing the third heart in hand, not in dummy.

www.woodside.co.uk/bridge.

© Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

PLEIONOSIS
a. Tautology
b. A purple rock plant
c. Self-importance

BRATTICING
a. A fence
b. Hem-stitch
c. Thin ice

HALIDOM
a. An axe-pike
b. Holy thing
c. A Tolkien kingdom
SPHRAGISTICS
a. Study of seals
b. Human resource management
c. PE with Indian clubs

Answers on page 42

KEENE on CHESS

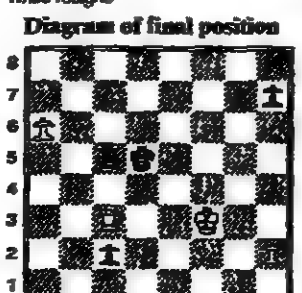
By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Kasparov Leads
The world champion, Garry Kasparov, made a fine start in the elite tournament at Las Palmas. In the first round he won a complicated game as Black against the Bulgarian grandmaster Veselin Topalov. Meanwhile Anand drew with Kramnik while Karpov drew with Ivanchuk.

White: Veselin Topalov
Black: Garry Kasparov

Queen's Indian Defence

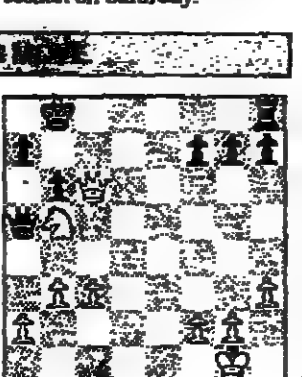
1 d4 Nf6
2 c4 e6
3 g3 Bb4+
4 Bb2 Be7
5 Bg2 d5
6 Nf3 c5
7 Bc2 Nc6
8 Qc2 b5
9 Ne5 Nf7
10 Nc3 Bb7
11 Rd1 a5
12 c5 Sd5
13 Qd3 Qd5
14 Bg3 Rf7
15 Nc3 Rf8
16 Bb4 Nf6
17 Bb5 Nb8
18 Bxc1 Nc6
19 a4 Bc4
20 Bf1 b5
21 Nf4 b6
22 Bb4 bxc4
23 e4 Bb6
24 Qd5 Nd4
25 Qd4 e5
26 Nf5 Bg5
27 Nf4 c7
28 Qc2 Qc7
29 Ng5 Qc6
30 Nf3 Rf8
31 Rd1 Rf8
32 g4 Rf8
33 g5 Qc2+
34 Kf2 Nf6
35 Kh1 Nf6
36 Re1 Rf4



After 60 Rf5+ Kc5 61 a7 c1/Q 62 a8/Q Qh1+ Black wins the white queen.

Internet Coverage
The tournament can be followed on the Internet. Site address: <http://www.las Palmas.com/sports/chess/keene>

© Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.



By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Sveshnikov - Sokolov, Elista 1996. Queen and knight are a powerful attacking combination, as they complement each other well. This is a typical example. How did White win quickly?

Solution on page 42

SNOOKER

Harold hits back to turn tables on Gray

FROM PHIL YATES IN OSNABURGH

DAVE HAROLD experienced the particular satisfaction associated with avenging recent defeat when he gained a high-quality 5-2 victory over David Gray to reach the quarter-finals of the German Open here yesterday.

Last month, Harold, the world No 11, was beaten 9-6 by Gray in the first round of the United Kingdom championship and when Gray, 17, established a 2-0 advantage, another surprising result looked likely.

But Harold found some confidence and went on to equal the highest break of the tournament's televised phase, held by Ken Doherty, with a clearance of 122 in the fourth frame.

That enabled him to level at 2-2 and, after the interval, it was one-way traffic as the 1993 Asian Open champion, from Stoke, conceded a miserable 15 points in controlling the next three frames with further runs of 56, 62, 45 and 62.

Harold, who celebrated his thirtieth birthday on Monday, will attempt to reach the semi-finals at the expense of Alastair Robb, an opponent he has beaten on all three of their previous meetings.

Robb had earlier guaranteed an appearance in his third consecutive ranking event quarter-final with a typically solid, no-frills performance. The bearded French Canadian, who arrived occupying a career high tenth position in the provisional world standings, defeated Jason Ferguson, of Mansfield, 5-1.

Robb is now sure to finish 1996 as the game's highest ranked overseas player.

ACADEMY OF SPORT

List of candidates cut by half

By DAVID MILLER

THE 26 bids to create the proposed British Academy of Sport were yesterday reduced to a not-so-short list of 13 by Lord MacLaurin, chairman-designate of the new UK Sports Council, in collaboration with Iain Sproat, Minister for Sport.

The remaining candidates are to be evaluated for their technical and practical plans, with a decision to be reached "in the early spring next year". The process, though, looks uncomfortably bureaucratic, not least because the UK Sports Council, under its present constitution, has no authority for distributing lottery funds, which would be carried out by its "junior" partner, the former Sports Council, now the England Sports Council.

The anomaly must be resolved. As Dick Palmer, general secretary of the British Olympic Association (BOA), pointed out, at present individual athletes are eligible to apply for funding from one of

the four regional councils, yet might find themselves left off the elite squad designated for Olympic preparation by the UK Sports Council, whose exclusive role this is.

"There must be one-stop funding," Palmer said. "You couldn't, if you tried, devise a confused system as exists at the moment."

Sproat said that the academy would be "the most exciting development in British sport for many years, will be the pinnacle of a network of regional institutions and academies for particular sports, and will provide world-class services and facilities for today's athletes."

Why, then, has the UK Sports Council not been put in a position to be more directly guided in the creation of the academy by the BOA, the most experienced body in elite-sport management, that co-ordinates so closely already with the various individual governing bodies? Any influence in the decision will come from Craig

Reedie, a member of the UK Sports Council, though it might be said that he has a vested interest.

The BOA, significantly, having studied a dozen bids, has already formed a partnership with one of them, Upper Heyford, in Oxfordshire. The BOA regards the available former United States Air Force base as ideal. It is a mile from the M40, and already approved by the county council for development. Indeed, it might be supposed that the BOA has a better concept of the academy's creation than any bureau of politicians and bureaucrats.

One of the key factors at Heyford is the existence of an American hospital that would embrace both medicine and sports science.

SHORT-LISTED BIDS: The athletes' bid (Hertfordshire), Bath, Birmingham West Midlands, Central Consortium (Leicestershire, Nottingham and Lincolnshire), De Montfort University, Hougham Grange (Huntingdon), Kent-Thameside, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield, UK Academy 2000 (Yorkshire), Upper Heyford (Oxfordshire).

FOOTBALL

Beit's Scottish League Premier division

Celtic v Kilmarnock
Dundee v Hibernian
Dundee v Aberdeen
Motherwell v Raith (7.45)

First division

East Fife v Greenock Morton
Aberdeen v Clydebank
Venezia v Greenock Morton

DR MARTENS CUP: Second round
Cortay v Raith (7.45); Epsom v Moor Green; Salisbury v Newport (8.05); St Albans v Boreham Wood; St Albans v Boreham Wood

UNION LEAGUE: Premier division
Bishop Auckland v Accrington Stanley
League Cup: Third-round replay: Bolton v Hyde; President's Cup: First-round replay: Blyth Spartans v Spennymoor

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION
First division: Cheltenham v Crystal Palace (2.0); Portsmouth v Ipswich (7.0); Tottenham v Scunthorpe (at St Albans FC, 2.0); Haverhill v Bournemouth (at Upton Park, 2.0); Walsingham v Brighton (at Plough Lane, 2.0)

FOOTBALL

Borough FC, 7.0; Huddersfield v Middlesbrough (7.0); West Bromwich v Blackpool (at Fallowfield Town FC, 7.0); Second division: Burnley v Wrexham (7.15); Hull v York (7.15); Rotherham v Mansfield City (7.0); Stockport v Carlisle (8.45); Third division: Chester v Lincoln (7.0); Wigan v Scarborough (7.0)

SMITHSONIAN IRISH LEAGUE: First division: Carrick v Ballymena; Derry v Ballymena; Carrick v Ballymena; Carrick v Ballymena

GILBERT LEAGUE CUP: Second round, second leg: Carmarthen v Walspool; Ebbw Vale v Barry; Inter Cable-Tel v Carmarthen Town; Van Peltre v Ebbw Vale

SCREWMO DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Celtic v Larnaca

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Huntly v Peterhead

NORTH WEST COUNTIES FLOODIT TROPHY: Second round: Prescot v Colwyn Colliery; Runcorn v Alton Colliery

HALES FREIGHT LEISURE SENIOR CUP: Quarter-final: Shelbourne v Cherry Orchard (7.45)

RUGBY UNION

Tour match

England A v South Africa A (at Gloucester, 7.30)

Anglo-Welsh Cup

Pool 2A
London Irish v Newport (7.30)

HART GILMORE FOUR COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP: Gloucestershire v Shropshire (at Derby, 7.30); Glamorgan v Worcester and Hereford (at Worcester, 7.30)

TIPPERARY COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: North v Carrigrohane (at Carrigrohane, 7.30); South v Ennis (at Carrigrohane, 7.30)

CLB MATCHES: Chesham v RAF (7.0); Reading v High Wycombe (7.0)

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Bucklebury League: Leicestershire v Manchester (8.0); Classic Colley's National Trophy: Semi-final, first leg: Oxford v Derby (8.0)

RACING: MAKTOUMS MAINTAIN SUPPORT FOR YEARLING ENTRY STAGE TO BLUE RIBBON

Epsom on track for £1m Derby

By JULIAN MUSCAT

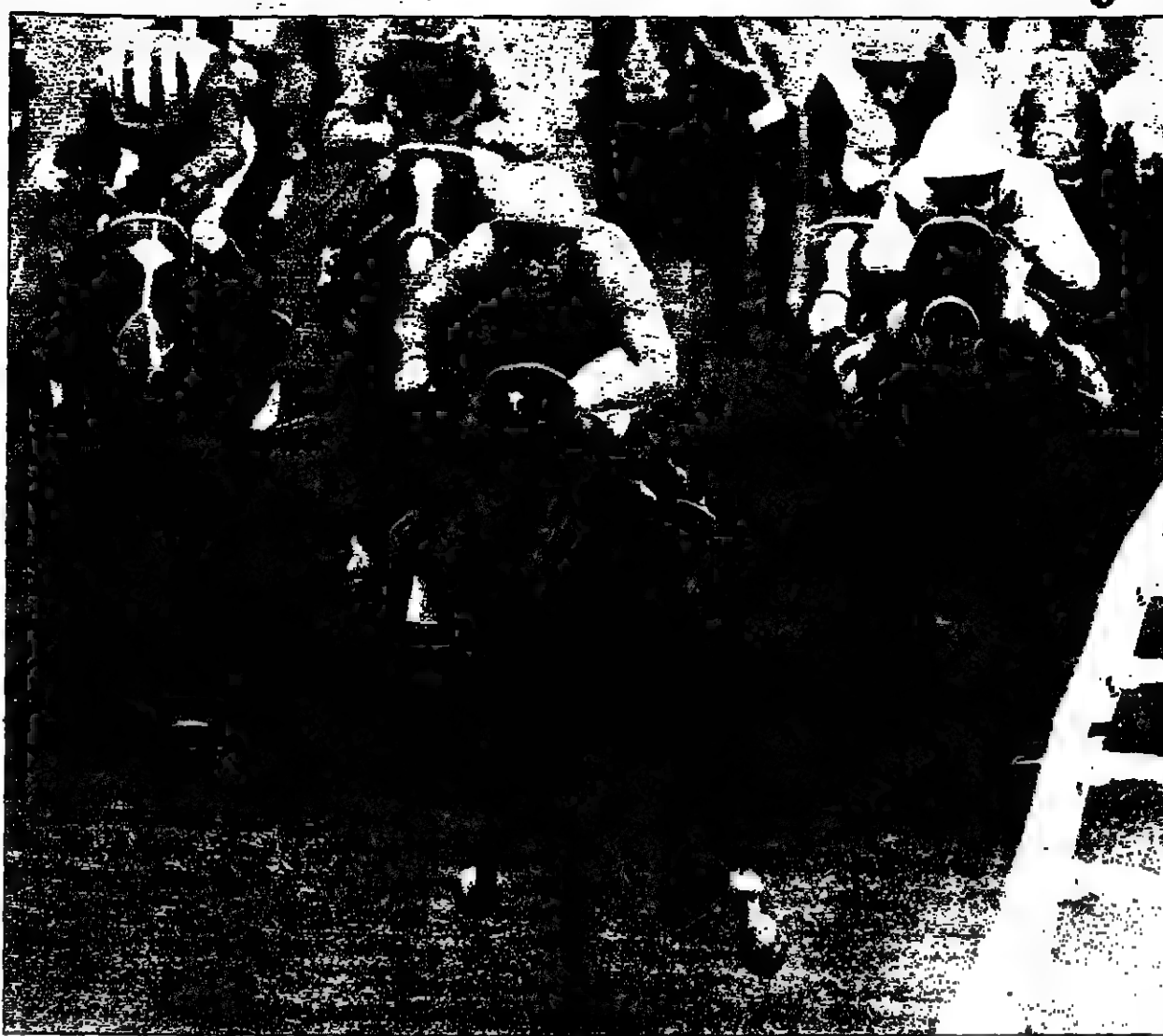
EPSOM racecourse is looking forward to staging the first £1 million Derby after it emerged yesterday that the new supplementary entry system, announced two months ago, had not deterred owners from nominating horses in the traditional manner.

Fears that the Maktoum family would bypass the yearling entry, which closed on December 4, were allayed when upwards of 150 Maktoum-owned horses were among the nominees. The full list is expected to be published later this week, and it will be surprising if the entry is insufficient to entertain a seven-figure purse for the first time in 1998.

In October, the Epsom executive introduced a £75,000 supplementary stage, payable seven days before the Epsom classic. The move was designed to allow horses not already nominated a route into the race. The Blue Riband has suffered this decade because non-eligible horses have landed a significant proportion of Derby trials. Their non-participation at Epsom has diluted the quality of Britain's premier race.

However, concern that the new mechanism would undermine the yearling entry stage were cast aside by Sheikh Mohammed's racing manager, Anthony Stroud. "We did our sums and established a substantial difference in favour of entering yearlings," he said. "We view the new supplementary stage as an opportunity to enter horses that warrant the opportunity — particularly fillies, as might have happened with Oh So Sharp in 1985."

Sheikh Mohammed's Darley Stud Manager is well



Shamit's first prize of £523,100 in this year's Derby could soon be overshadowed. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

Nap: FANTASY LINE (1.00 Leicester)
Next best: Slingaby (1.30 Leicester)

en-figure purse for the first time in 1998.

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Sheikh Mohammed's Darley Stud Manager is well

represented with 70 yearling entries at last week's deadline. That is ten fewer than last year, but the sheikh-inspired Godolphin stable — which now embraces yearlings owned by Sheikh Maktoum and Sheikh Hamdan — has underlined its commitment by nominating 48 yearlings.

"The yearling entry is the most cost-effective for us," Godolphin's racing manager, Simon Cristoford, said. "If we missed out the yearling stage and had a borderline case or a horse with a niggling injury, seven days before the Derby,

we probably couldn't justify supplementing it," he said. "After all, £75,000 is a lot of money. Entering now also means we won't have to guess whether a lightly raced horse is worth supplementing."

The Derby entry structure is complicated but Maktoum support at the yearling stage was crucial to achieving the much-desired £1 million pot. With each yearling costing £250 to nominate, the Dubai family have already paid outwards of £40,000 into the prize-money pool for 1998. Further forecasts are due as the

race approaches — together with a second opportunity to enter, as a cost of £3,000 — two months before the race. A Derby runner entered as a yearling will have cost his owner £5,000 in fees.

Prize-money of £859,000 was distributed among the first four finishers in this year's Derby. Given a similar prize-money pot in 1998, it will require just two late supplements to swell the pool beyond £1 million.

However, Epsom faces an uphill struggle to maintain the size of the yearling entry. The

1997 Derby attracted 554 nominations, a near 11 per cent fall on the previous year. A similar number is expected for 1998.

Derby Day itself is also perceived to be in decline. The event was poorly promoted to the public prior to Epsom's purchase by Racecourse Holdings Trust in 1994. In promising to deliver a £1 million Derby, the new supplementary entry system in 1998 will also allow the best horses the chance to compete. There are two significant landmarks in the Derby's regeneration.

Wakeham demands end to divisive arguments

By JULIAN MUSCAT

LORD WAKEHAM, the British Horseracing Board (BHB) chairman, yesterday launched a withering attack on the board's critics, urging them to unite behind racing's leadership or face exclusion from government corridors to the long-term detriment of the sport.

Speaking at the annual Gimcrack Dinner at York racecourse last night, Lord Wakeham responded at length to isolated calls for his resignation. They followed racing's abortive case to secure tax concessions in Kenneth Clarke's Budget last month. "No sooner had the Chancellor sat down than the recriminations began," Lord Wakeham said. "Divisions for which racing is regrettably notorious started to open up."

He cited the BHB's aim of taking over the distributive functions of the Horserace Betting Levy Board as a prime example of the need for government assistance. And he used the BHB's ambition as a platform to castigate those who pursued sectional interests at the expense of the sport's best interests.

"We haven't a cat in hell's

chance of persuading any government to provide the legislative changes needed to effect this transfer, or indeed to support our initiatives, if some of our constituents continue to make the sort of ill-considered pronouncements which have risen to a crescendo in the last fortnight," he said.

"Some of them have shown breathtaking naivety and I am afraid, are typical of those who don't bother to learn about what goes on in the real world. If racing is to continue to be taken seriously by government, it needs quickly to develop a perceptible maturity in its approach."

But he urged racing to react constructively to the disappointment by improving both its product and its relations with the bookmaking industry, which presented its own case for betting tax cuts to the Chancellor. "The extent to which two separate submissions really did prejudice the chances of success will never be definitively known. But one thing is certain: it didn't help."

He also touched on the need for racing to establish a game plan. "We must unite behind a strategy," he insisted, "on which there will be the fullest consultation."



Wakeham: conviction

HEXHAM

12.50 Federation Brewery Special Ale

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307 2488 ROBERTA 12 J Dams 5-10-12 ... R Garry 87
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CRICKET

Butcher saves A team's bacon

FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN BRISBANE

BRISBANE (first day of four: Queensland won toss): England A have scored 170 for seven wickets against Queensland

MARK BUTCHER failed once again to reach a century, but his determination and resolve prevented the capitulation of the England A team on the first day of the final match of its tour, against Queensland, here yesterday.

The Surrey left-hander has long looked the most impressive batsman in the party, the most likely to make the step up to the senior side for the Ashes series next summer.

The only blot on his tour copybook has been his failure to convert impressive innings into three figures: a bad habit that is out of place with Butcher's exemplary tech-

innings on this tour, however, Butcher failed to reach three figures after passing 50, a statistic that clearly rankles with a player determined to emulate his father, Alan, and play Test cricket.

"I was thinking about it the other day and I'm still not playing as well as I can," he said. "I've managed to get seven half-centuries out here without ever feeling in top form."

"It would have been nice to get a hundred and I thought I was settled in for one today. It's probably something to do with concentration, but it's better than walking out with five or ten every time. When I start feeling I'm in a bit of touch it will probably come much easier, but every run scored out here has been hard work for me."

His patiently compiled 72 included eight boundaries and held the England A innings together. Jason Gallian, playing his first innings since cracking his right index finger against the Australian Cricket Academy three weeks ago, helped Butcher to add 60 for the fourth wicket before becoming the third of four victims for Brendan Creevey, the Queensland fast bowler who was making his first-class debut.

"It's been a long time since I've been out in the middle and my finger felt really good today," Gallian said. "I felt the finger on the odd shot but I was pleased with the way I was playing and it didn't hurt too much when I played the aggressive shots."

"It's the best I have batted for a while, but unfortunately a good ball got me. It was seaming around a lot early in the day, which we thought it would after looking at the first Test when Australia played West Indies here."

"The first session on the first day is all about survival and if you have got wickets in hand after that you can build a big score. It didn't work out today, but we will be looking to press on tomorrow."

Butcher's innings was finally ended by a bat-pad catch off the left-arm spinner, Paul Jackson. Mark Ealham and Ashley Giles remained unbeaten when the storm forced the players to scurry for cover, giving England A some hope of a respectable total.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND A: First innings
M A Butcher c Cassell b Jackson 72
M P Vaughan c Bortz b Creevey 56
A McGrath c Law b Muller 1
C White c Scrimshaw b Creevey 36
J F R Gailan bow b Creevey 36
A J Hollands bow b Priestbridge 0
M A Ealham not out 14
W K Hogg c Law b Creevey 3
A F Giles not out 11
Extras (b 5, nb 0) 11
Total (7 wickets) 170
G Creevey and D W Hogg bowled
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-8, 2-9, 3-39, 4-99, 5-114, 6-147, 7-184
BOWLING: Muller 17-5-41-1, Creevey 18-4-41-4, Priestbridge 12-2-46-1, Law 8-14-0, Jackson 14-2-23-1
QUEENSLAND: T J Bantley, T J Dixon, J P Maher, M G Law, M P Moll, J L Cassell, W A Scrimshaw, S A Priestbridge, B N Creevey, P W Jackson, S A Muller
Umpires: P D Parker and J F Torpy

rique. A century on a lively Gabba pitch would have been greatly appreciated by his team-mates, but his contribution in defying an impressive second-string Queensland attack has already given England A a fighting chance of building a competitive total. When a storm ended play prematurely, the touring team had reached 170 for seven. Such a score looked unlikely after a stuttering start.

The Yorkshire trio of Michael Vaughan, Anthony McGrath and Craig White departed within 15 overs of the start, after England A had been invited to bat. But for Butcher's 2½ hours of defiance, Queensland would have ended the first day having made inroads into England's first-innings score.

For the seventh time in 13



Michael Atherton, the England captain, loses his middle stump to Henry Olonga in the opening session of the tour match against Matabeleland yesterday. Report, page 44

Azharuddin takes control

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

KANPUR (third day of five): India, with five second-innings wickets in hand, lead South Africa by 330 runs

AN UNBEATEN 88 by Mohammed Azharuddin put India in command as their overall lead swelled to 330 runs on the third day of the third and deciding Test match against South Africa at the Green Park stadium in Kanpur yesterday.

Aided by stubborn resistance from his fellow batsmen, Azharuddin punished the South Africa attack, hitting 15 boundaries as India, starting the day on seven for one, reached 270 for five at the close.

Azharuddin executed some sparkling drives on both sides of the wicket and was particularly severe on Lance Klusener, the pace bowler, whom he struck for eight boundaries. Paul Adams, the left-arm spinner, was despatched to the fence six times in Azharuddin's chanceless innings, compiled in 142 balls, during which he added 71 runs for the fifth wicket with Sachin Tendulkar.

The India captain, who was yesterday reappointed for the tour of South Africa,

Zimbabwe and West Indies next year, hit four fours in his 30 before he edged Klusener to the wicketkeeper, Dave Richardson. Rahul Dravid, undefeated on 33 at the close, also hit four boundaries and shared in an unbroken stand of 78 with Azharuddin.

Despite the unpredictable pitch, Azharuddin stood by his policy to attack the South African bowling. "You can't just go out and defend," he said. "Sometimes you have to convert the good ball into a bad one. It was a case of being positive and taking my chance."

SCOREBOARD

INDIA: First innings 277 (5 wickets) W V Raman 57, P R Adams 9-69
SECOND INNING
W V Raman bow b De Villiers 42
M A Kumble c Gibbs b De Villiers 28
S C Ganguly c McMillan b Symcox 41
S R Tendulkar c Richardson b Klusener 38
M Azharuddin not out 88
S B Dey not out 35
Extras (b 4, nb 0, lb 0) 12
Total (5 wickets) 270
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-2, 2-41, 3-81, 4-121, 5-192
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 177 (5 wickets) De Villiers 21-10-49-2, Klusener 22-6-42-2, McMillan 16-6-36-0, Come 10-4-12-0, Adams 12-0-57-0, Symcox 13-1-43-0
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 177 (5 wickets) De Villiers 21-10-49-2, Klusener 22-6-42-2, McMillan 16-6-36-0, Come 10-4-12-0, Adams 12-0-57-0, Symcox 13-1-43-0
Umpires: D R Shepherd (England) and S Verheul (South Africa)

West Indians beaten by scratch team

CANBERRA (Prime Minister's XI won toss): Australian Prime Minister's XI beat West Indians by 58 runs

THE West Indians suffered a further blow to their morale when they were beaten by 58 runs in their limited-overs match against an Australian Prime Minister's XI in Canberra yesterday.

The touring team, 2-0 down in the Test series against Australia and without a win in the World Series one-day competition, were outplayed by a scratch team of Sheffield players led by the former Test captain, Allan Border.

Courtney Walsh, the West Indies captain, said: "Our batting didn't have any conviction or confidence." Walsh said his side conceded about 30 runs because of poor fielding.

Chasing the hosts' total of 258 for eight in their 50 overs, the West Indians scored 200 for nine in 43.4 overs. To add to the West Indians' troubles, Patterson Thompson, the fast bowler, was unable to bat because of a knee injury.

Scoreboard, page 41

Giddins case leads to appeals review

By IVO TENNANT

THE Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) is planning to revamp its system of hearing disciplinary appeals at its winter meeting today and tomorrow.

This follows the protracted procedures earlier this year when dealing with Raymond Illingworth, the former chairman of selectors, and Ed Giddins, the Sussex fast bowler who was banned from first-class cricket.

This will be the TCCB's last meeting before handing over power to the new English Cricket Board at the start of next year. A small working party was set up in the autumn by the discipline committee to carry out a review of disciplinary regulations. The aim was to provide a more efficient, speedy and fair system when the cases of individual players were to be heard.

The chairman of this committee, who is at present Gerard Elias, QC, would have the power to hold a personal meeting with the player in question. If this was not satisfactorily resolved, the individual would go before a three-man hearing. The final

resort would be a full disciplinary hearing in front of at least five members of the committee. The chairman could appoint himself or somebody else to hear any appeal. This would replace present procedures, since the Cricket Council will cease to exist when the new board comes into being.

Other matters to be resolved at the winter meeting will include the awarding of two runs to the batting side for each wide conceded in first-class cricket next year. It will bring this particular extra in line with the penalty for a no-ball.

The TCCB is also proposing that the choice of ball for a Test series be resolved at the start of the season. It will no longer be decided on the toss of a coin and will mean that the captains in question would use the same make of ball for each Test match during an English summer.

John Steele, the former Leicestershire all-rounder, is to replace Kevin Lyons on the first-class umpires list for next year. The latter joins the reserve list.

RUGBY UNION: SCOTS ENLIST AID OF ONLY ONE NEWCOMER TO TAKE ON THE ITALIANS

Scotland recall Reed to turn the tide

By MARK SOUSTER

TWO years after his last international appearance, Andy Reed, the Wasps lock forward, has been recalled to the Scotland team and will win his eleventh cap against Italy at Murrayfield on Saturday.

Reed, 27, is one of four changes to the side that performed so disappointingly against Australia. He replaces Doddie Weir, while Scott Hastings returns, as does Bryan Redpath. Matt Stewart, the Northampton tight-head prop, is the one new cap.

A chronic back injury interrupted Reed's career, and meant he missed two five-nations championships, the 1995 World Cup and a tour to New Zealand. "It's like winning my first cap again," Reed said as the squad gathered for a public training session in Edinburgh's Princes Street

Gardens. "It's been a long time and I can't wait. Earlier this year I was wondering if I would ever play again, let alone for my country."

After four consecutive defeats, and the urgent need of victory against Italy, the selectors have adopted a back-to-the-future policy, opting where possible for experience. Indeed, five players were involved in the 1990 team, which also says much about the lack of real emerging talent. The one nod to the future is the inclusion of Stewart, 23, who replaces his namesake, Barry, from Edinburgh Academicals, dropped after two appearances, albeit against New Zealand and Australia.

"I have got Ian McGeechan [the Northampton director of rugby] to thank for everything," Stewart, who moved to Blackheath this year, said. "I'd been around for three years

but never really got a look in. The move has paid off and being with McGeechan is the icing on the cake."

Ritchie Dixon, the Scotland team coach, said: "He is a very strong player, good in the scrum and technically efficient in the lineout. Barry Stewart, the player he replaces, is a young man and has had two tough tests, but he's still very much in the picture."

At the other end of the scale Hastings, who was pleasantly surprised at his reinstatement, wins his 63rd cap in a reshuffled three-quarter line that sees Gregor Townsend on the move again, this time to inside centre in place of Ronnie Erickson. Townsend can only hope that, in the long term, his versatility does not prove his worst enemy.

The No 10 shirt, he still covets is again worn by his rival, Craig Chalmers, who links up with Bryan Redpath, his club colleague, who returns because of injury to Gary Armstrong. Keeping together the partnership that works so effectively for Melrose makes sense and the different qualities Redpath brings, not least his speed of service, should give Chalmers that extra breathing space.

David Johnston, the backs coach, hopes the threequarters will prove more clinical than against Australia, when

chances were squandered, not he said, because of a lack of speed, but a lack of awareness and anticipation. "The back three were at fault on a couple of occasions against Australia, and this gives us another chance to look at another blend in midfield."

Among the forwards, Reed and Cronin, the Wasps pair, are back in harness. They last played together at international level for the British Isles against Waikato in 1993, an experience both would rather forget. Reed is a proven middle jumper and he and Cronin, whose lineout work against Australia could not be faulted, will hope to expose Italy's weakness in that area, as England did so ruthlessly a fortnight ago.

Dixon said Weir's demotion was due to a lack of application. "His work rate against Australia was not as great as it might have been."

Thornhill, 28, has won 12 of his 13 contests, including seven stoppages, his one blemish coming in February 1994 when he drew with Eddie Lloyd. He trades on aggression, but is likely to find the accurate Juko too smart. The holder has so far failed to build on his victory over Tony Peps of Canada, which won him the Commonwealth title 15 months ago.

Another new recruit for Maloney, Crawford Ashley, the Leeds light-heavyweight, will meet the durable Tony Booth, of Sheffield, while he awaits an attempt at the European title, for which he is the leading contender. Ashley has lost two world title attempts - against Michael Nunn, for the International Boxing Federation super-middleweight title, and Virgil Hill, for the World Boxing Association light-heavyweight title.

BOXING

Thornhill faces an uphill task

GARY THORNHILL, of Liverpool, attempts to seize the Commonwealth super-featherweight title from Justin Juko, the holder, at the Elephant and Castle Leisure Centre, London, tonight.

Juko, a London-based Ugandan, was called in to fill the bill when Thornhill's proposed bout for the British title was called off after P J Gallagher, the champion, was injured in training.

Frank Maloney, the promoter, sees the contest as a stepping stone to a world title contest for Juko, who has recently joined him from the Frank Warren camp. "We want to move Justin into a world title situation. And I'm not worried which version of the title," Maloney said.

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CHANGING TIMES

Redgrave lengths ahead in personality test

The name of the award neatly skewers the medium's own ambivalent feelings about sport. On Sunday, we celebrate the sporting year, and with it, the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year.

It is a title that is not quite sure whether it is rewarding charisma or achievement, charm or victory, marketability or excellence. Such is modern television sport: not seeking to please sports enthusiasts but to seduce those who do not give a hoot either way. But it is an award that, for some reason, matters. Matters to the people who receive it, matters to the rest of sport. It is the result of a free vote, even if single-sport enthusiasts, especially from motor racing, perpetually distort it. It is not a scholarly assessment, it is an emotional business.

What athlete means most to you? If it was nothing but a chunk of end-of-term nonsense, an award that doesn't matter a jot, then I wouldn't trouble to write these words. But somehow it does seem to matter and, since I fear very much that the great British public will get it wrong — the track-record does not inspire total

confidence — I think we had better run through runners and riders before allowing my own contender to win by the length of the straight.

Outsiders include Stephen Hendry, who continues to purvey remorseless excellence in a televisable sport that has found some kind of level after the passing of its golden age. Nick Faldo, who won the Masters as Greg Norman collapsed like the House of Usher, is also in with a distant shout. There is a stronger argument to be made for Laura Davies, and a plausible feminist case for saying that she should win it. She won two majors and topped the European money-list in a magnificent year. Her

Bothamesque sense of style and occasion would make her pretty close to an automatic winner, were she male. I am not the world's No.1 cheerleader for golf, but Davies cuts across my antipathy. And as for "personality", whatever that is, she has it in bucketfuls.

So does Frankie Dettori. I have only met him once, when I bumped into him outside some weighing-room or other, and he asked me

SIMON BARNES



Midweek View

where so-and-so was. I told him and walked away, feeling that the world was a better place. There is something profoundly life-loving about him. And his afternoon of perfection at Ascot, his slaying of the bookmakers, is already a legend.

Tim Henman lightened the British summer at Wimbledon and gave a warm winter glow last week. He might well win it; but really, the title should reward achievement rather

than promise. Damon Hill has already won the title for losing, so perhaps it would be only fair if he won it for winning. He is a decent man and a champion more or less despite himself; he would be a more deserving winner than many.

But really, how can they not give it to Steve Redgrave? Rowing may not be mainstream, but the achievement is phenomenal. Four Olympic gold medals in four Games: we are talking about a man who commutes to and from the summit of Everest, the moon, Alpha Centauri.

If this were a reward for pure excellence, then Redgrave would, indeed, win it by the length of the straight. But I can hear the gibe already forming on the lips of the irredeemably trivial: "Personality? What personality?"

Well, if you cannot see what personality, it says more about you than it does about Redgrave. True, he lacks the sunniness of Davies, the incandescence of Dettori. He lacks the thousand opportunities granted Hill and Henman for showing us his face and his emotions.

It is a strange fact of life that if you

touch ice, it seems to burn. That is the case with Redgrave. You get close to him and you are not sure whether you feel intense heat or intense cold.

He is a man capable of summoning up the frenzy of a berserker without for a second abnegating his perfect control. He is a man capable of giving his life to the freezing waters and the boiling, sweat-drenched gym. A man capable of giving everything; and then more. His decision to go for one more gold, while arousing knee-jerk

responses — come off it, Steve, the game's been good to you — was one of a haunting nobility. He has given his youth and strength to sport. Now he is preparing to give his age and his weakness. But I still won't bet against him. His achievement is extraordinary; and he has a personality, quiet and subtle, to match it.

If he does not win the award, it is a profound reproach to every person who voted against him. Let us give Redgrave the final word. As he announced his intention to go for a fifth Games, his wife said sadly that she had hoped that he would go out at the top. Redgrave: "I intend to."

'Now he will give it his age and weakness'

'He has given sport his youth and strength'

MOTOR RACING: FORMER WORLD CHAMPION FIRST TO FLAG WITH LAUNCH OF NEW CAR

Wily Stewart steals march on rivals

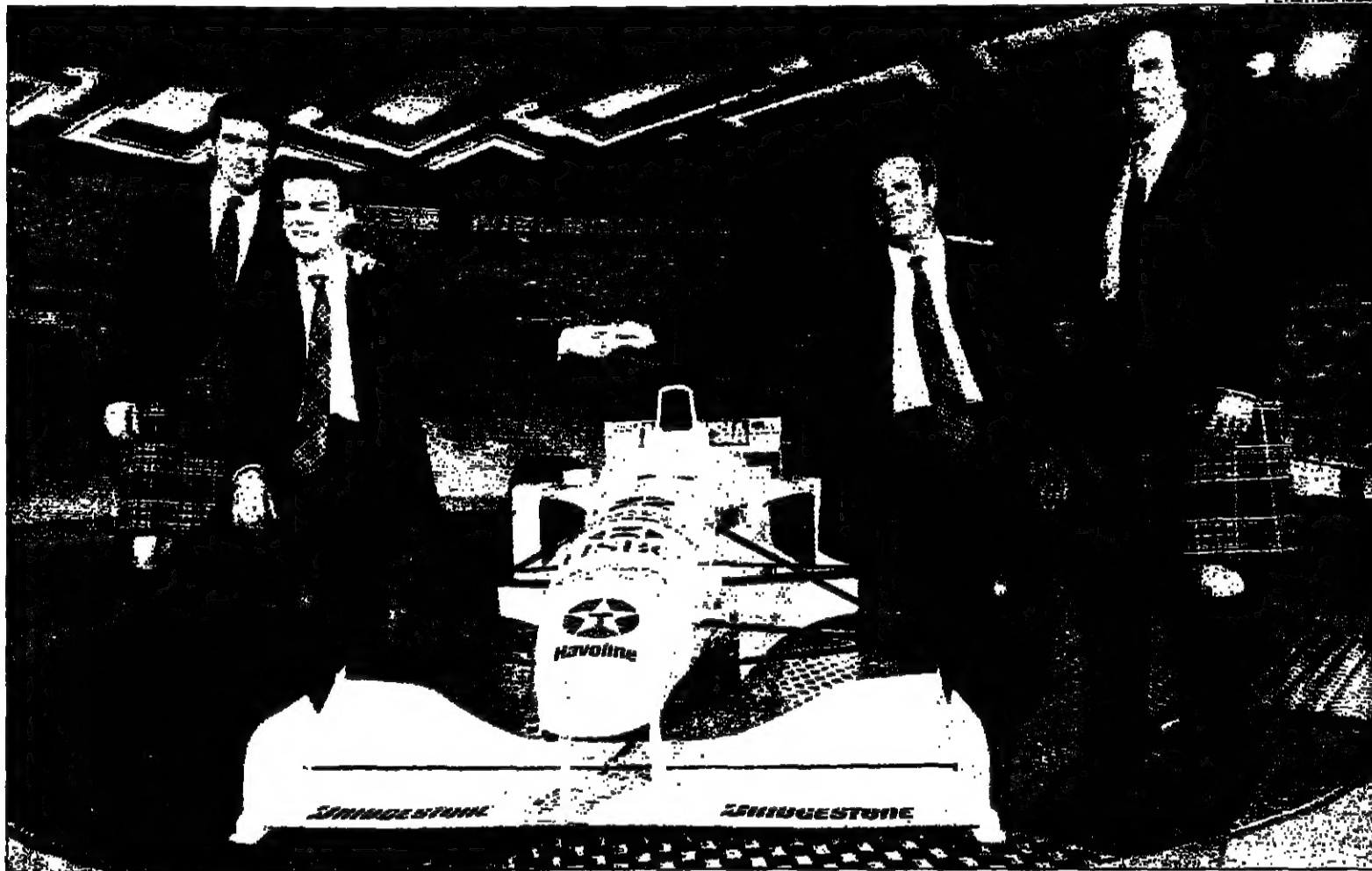
By OLIVER HOIT

THE Formula One new boys beat the old guard to the punch yesterday. Stewart-Ford, who will contest their debut grand prix in Australia in March, unveiled their new car in front of the massed ranks of the media at a hotel in central London. If the grid for the Australian Grand Prix were governed by the glitz and professionalism of a launch, then Stewart would be on pole position.

At the centre of it all was Jackie Stewart, three times the world champion and now revelling in a return to the limelight. He indulged the foreign television crews who wanted to know all about Scotland and made jokes about how his new drivers would not be wearing kilts or tartan pyjamas in the cockpit. He did interviews for scores of television and radio stations and made all the right noises.

He said that it was not realistic for the team that he will run with his son, Paul, to hope to win races next season, despite the fact that he has raised £20 million in sponsorship from sources as disparate as the Malaysian Government, Sanyo, Texaco and the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation.

That makes Stewart-Ford the best funded new team ever to enter Formula One and the operation oozes professionalism from top to bottom. Every small detail seems to have been taken into consideration. Stewart, for instance, said their research had shown that the white colour of the car was "excellent" for visual accessi-



Jackie, far right, and Paul Stewart launch the new Formula One car with their drivers Jan Magnussen, left, and Rubens Barrichello

bility on television and that the tartan touches were "instantly pleasing to the eye".

"The way we have prepared for next season from scratch and the work that has been done," Paul Stewart said, "has

been nothing short of a miracle. Alan Jenkins, our designer, has been working flat out and it is very gratifying to see it all coming together. The only way we will know for sure, though, is when we get out on the track."

The car is scheduled to run for the first time within the next fortnight, possibly at Silverstone, although it is more likely that the outing will be at a warm-weather circuit such as Estoril or Barcelona. Wherever they decide, it will give Stewart and his drivers a crucial head start over the rest of the field. The next team to launch their car is Ferrari on January 7.

"The full of more nervous excitement today than at any time in my life," Jackie Stewart said, after the car, which

will be powered by a Ford V10 engine, had been unveiled. "The decision to establish the Stewart-Ford team marks the most daunting challenge I have ever faced. But, to the best of my knowledge, we have the only car that has been designed from start to finish by computer and we are cautiously optimistic about the season ahead. The best we can realistically hope for, though, is podium finishes."

"The aim really is to improve steadily. This is not a fly-by-night organisation and all our deals, including those with our drivers are long-term deals. Within five years, we would hope to be in a position to be challenging for championships."

Much of the optimism rests on the recruitment of the

team's two young drivers. Rubens Barrichello, formerly of Jordan, Jan Magnussen, of Denmark. Magnussen, in particular, is rich in promise even though a stellar career in Formula 3, where he won more races than Ayrton Senna had a decade earlier, stalled in recent years when he committed himself to McLaren but was given only limited testing time.

Simultaneously, he raced in the International Touring Car series but always yearned for a return to single-seater racing.

"Jan was one of the first drivers on our list," Stewart said. "When he drove for us in Formula 3, he was so intelligent in bringing the car to its limit and knowing when he was there. He was quite

extraordinary. Now he is committed to Stewart-Ford 100 per cent and we have already been enormously impressed with him."

Stewart also revealed he now felt it might be a blessing in disguise that his team had lost out to TWR Arrows in the race for the signature of Damon Hill towards the end of last season. At the time, they were disappointed, he said, but that has passed.

"In many ways it would have been a great emotional boost to have Damon on board," he said. "But having the world champion in the team would have brought an enormous pressure to the team and its mechanics. We have invested in youth instead and we will go forward together now."

A new angle on Naughtie

Fishing Hotel, Radio 4 (FM), 10.00am.

Programmes like this would never go out on radio if the BBC scrupulously observed its ban on advertising. At least the hotel isn't named in the title, unlike the Thursday evening series currently on Radio 4 called *My Grandpa's Larder*. Last week it was subtitled *Bird's Custard*; tomorrow it's *Camp Coffee*. The anglers' retreat, the Lochmaddy, is on the Outer Hebrides island of North Uist. James Naughtie news interviewer and opera buff goes there for a spot of fly fishing. The last time he did it was when he was a lad. His instructor was his Dad. What distinguishes a fishing hotel from any other? Naughtie is just the man to find out. He knows a good news angle when he sees one.

A Grand, Mysterious Harmony, Radio 3, 7.30pm.

After tonight, only two programmes remain in this unprecedented series that has explained Bruckner's symphonic legacy in an evaluation of them by experts, and reminiscences from some of the people who knew the composer. Tonight, the BBC Philharmonic under G  nther Herbig performs the little-known original version of the No 8 which caused Bruckner such heartbreak. One of his great champions, Hermann Levi, refused to conduct his first performance because he said it sounded like a joke. The No 8 was called *The Apocalyptic*. You can hear the revised No 8 next Wednesday night.

Peter Davalle

RADIO 1

7.00am Chris Evans 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Lisa Vasey, includes at 12.30pm Newsweek and at 1.40pm The Soul Classics 2.00 Nicky Campbell 4.00 Mark Goodier, includes at 5.30pm Newsweek 7.00 Evening Session, with Jo Whiley and Steve Lamacq 8.00pm Magazine 10.00 Mark Radcliffe 12.00 Claire Sturgess, includes at 12.15pm The Net 4.00 Clive Wren

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30p Wales Up to Wogan 9.30p Ken Bruce 11.30p Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Dingle 3.00pm Ed Stewart 5.05p John Dunn 7.00p Jim Lloyd, with Folk on 2 8.00p The Inner Temple 9.20p 8.30p Dancers Comedy in song 10.30p World Today 10.45p Sports Roundup 11.10p Science View 11.15p Country Style 11.30p Multitrack 12.00pm From Our Own Correspondent 12.45p Britain Today 1.30p Outlook 3.15p Sports Roundup 3.15p Concert Hall 4.15p World Today 4.30p BBC English 4.45p Britain Today 5.30p World Business Report 5.15p Sports Roundup 6.30p Discovery 7.01p Outlook 7.25p Words of Faith 7.30p Multitrack 8.05p World Business Report 8.15p Britain Today 8.30p Meridian On Screen 10.30p World Today 10.45p Sports Roundup 11.10p Science View 11.15p Country Style 11.30p Multitrack 12.00pm From Our Own Correspondent 12.45p Britain Today 1.30p Outlook 3.15p Sports Roundup 3.15p Concert Hall 4.15p World Today 4.30p BBC English 4.45p Britain Today 5.30p World Business Report 5.15p Sports Roundup 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